ROLL DECLINE AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

A STUDY OF ADAPTING TO CHANGE, AN ATTEMPTED RATIONALISATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN STRATHCLYDE REGION

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I certify that this thesis is entirely my own work .

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of an attempt by a large education authority, Strathclyde Regional Council, to implement a planned rationalisation of school provision in an exercise named **Adapting to Change**. It examines the policy implications, in the Scottish education system, of roll decline at a time of financial retrenchment.

The background to the exercise is given by describing the history and geography of Strathclyde Region, the administration of the Council and the demographic factors forcing review of educational provision. Also explored are the contemporary political background in Scotland and Strathclyde.

Theoretical concepts relevant to power and influence in educational policy, namely pluralism, partnership, corporatism, centralism are then considered. This is supplemented by examination of recent work by writers on Scottish educational policy.

The rationale and methodology of the work are discussed and this is followed by an in-depth study of the overall process. The authority attempted to devolve limited decision making to 'Area Review Groups' and detailed examination is made of two areas reviewed by Strathclyde. This is supplemented by briefer investigation of two other areas. The study involved detailed examination of documentary evidence from Council files, public sources and campaign group documentation.

The issues raised by **Adapting to Change** are considered from the points of view of those who were centrally involved i.e. parents and teachers, churches and teachers' organisations, the education Directorate, councillors and central government. Analysis is informed by interviews, carried out by the researcher with senior councillors who were centrally involved in **Adapting to Change.**

In the light of the study the above theoretical concepts are re-examined. As a result two main two loci of power are identified as central government and senior councillors. Other parties such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Educational Institute of Scotland were found to exercise some restricted influence. However, parents had little opportunity to change policy. It is argued that there was less of a role for professionals in a contracting system in that there were few examples of officers exercising substantial influence over the policy process in this case. Little evidence is found of a influential group of educational professionals wielding influence over Scottish education and support is given to an analysis which sees education policy as determined outside Scotland and outside education, reflecting a drift of power from education professionals towards politicians and central government. Observations are made on the lack of support for New Right ideology in Scotland and it is argued that, paradoxically, the lack of support for the Conservatives in Strathclyde and more generally in Scotland enabled central government to intervene selectively in this case, with few resulting political consequences.

Contents

Note on Terminology

Some points should be noted to help aid understanding. "Adapting to Change" will denote the document of that name. Adapting to Change (written without quotation marks) refers to the Strathclyde's whole school rationalisation exercise from 1986 onwards. National should be taken to mean Scottish while UK and British will be used when coverage of a wider area is intended. Readers not familiar with Scotland should note that Scottish Office Ministers have much wider remits than their counterparts in London. The senior minister is the Secretary of State for Scotland and during the mid eighties he had a Minister of State (second in seniority) and three Under Secretaries of State. One of these Under Secretaries was responsible, amongst other areas, for education.

The text will refer to the West of Scotland. This may confuse the non Scot in that Fort William and Stranraer, which are clearly in the west of Scotland are not in the West of Scotland. West of Scotland refers broadly to the urban and semi-urban areas of Strathclyde. The term has psychological significance and tends to have connotations of working class, religiously divided and left-leaning communities.

Titles such as 'chairman of the education committee' are given as they were used by Strathclyde. They are not intended to be gender specific. In Scotland denominational education, apart from one Jewish primary school in Glasgow, is provided by the Roman Catholic Church. The first seven years, Primary 1 to Primary 7 (P1 to P7) are spent in primary schools while the next six years, Secondary 1 to Secondary 6 (S1 to S6) are spent in secondary school. Children are one year older than their counterparts in England when they transfer to secondary school. All local authority secondary schools in Scotland at the time were all-through

comprehensives and provided for the vast majority (96%) of pupils.[1]

[1] Pupils at education authority schools (786,300), pupils at grant -aided schools (1,400), pupils at independent schools (33,100). Figures for 1989/90 from Scottish Office (1991)*Scottish Abstract of Statistics 1990*, (Edinburgh, HMSO).

Abbreviations

APT	Area of Priority Treatment
CCC	Consultative Committee on the Curriculum
CSYS	Certificate of Sixth Year Studies
DES	Department of Education and Science (Now Department for Education, DfE)
EIS	Educational Institute of Scotland
GLC	Greater London Council
GTC	General Teaching Council
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
OL&SF	Our Lady and St Francis Secondary
LEA	Local Education Authority
P7, S3 etc.	Primary 7, Secondary 3 etc.
RC	Roman Catholic
SCOTVEC	Scottish Vocational Education Council
SEB	Scottish Examination Board
SED	Scottish Education Department (Now Scottish Office Education Department, SOED)
SCE	Scottish Certificate of Education
SNP	Scottish National Party
SDP	Social Democratic Party
TESS	Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative

Figures and Tables

Introduction

'Adapting to Change' was the name given to an attempt in the late 1980's to reorganise school provision in Europe's largest education authority, Strathclyde Regional Council. This thesis examines power and influence over policy within Adapting to Change. The Council's review was a product of the impact of declining numbers of pupils of school age and financial retrenchment caused by central government policies. The authority initiated a review of more than half of its educational provision and attempted to adopt a decentralised model of decision making which involved parents and teachers. The rationalisation was to be based on educational arguments, with potential financial considerations being largely excluded from the debate. Subsequent Council decisions on the use of money saved, weakened the educational basis of the review. In the course of events, the Council's aim to have a broadly agreed rationalisation programme failed. This failure was partly due to the lack of willingness of some local groups to recommend closures. Their reluctance was a result of the highly politicised and public nature of the reviews and of the unwillingness of groups to sanction the loss of local resources when there were few perceived benefits resulting. Some areas did propose substantial closures leading to an inconsistency of approach across the Region. The Council leadership's action on this inconsistency (and on the limited nature of aggregate closure proposals) led to Strathclyde's Regional Review Group substantially increasing the number of closures proposed. Thus the original consultative rationale was abandoned and the whole exercise undermined. The subsequent reversal of closure decisions by the Labour Group, in the face of public outcry, and the selective intervention of central government further

discredited the process. In the end only a modest reduction in surplus places was achieved with the episode being seen by the Council as a low point in its history.

In terms of the locus of power and influence it is argued that this study provides evidence of a 'dual centred' control over education policy. The two loci of power are central government and senior councillors. Other parties such as the Roman Catholic Church and the EIS exercised some restricted influence while parents had little opportunity to change policy. Further, in a contracting system,[1] it is argued that there is less of a role for professionals and the study found few examples of officers exercising substantial influence over the policy process. A drift of power from education towards politicians and central government is identified. Observations are made on the lack of support for New Right ideology in Scotland and it is proposed that central government was able to intervene selectively in Strathclyde, with few resulting political consequences. It is argued that this was in part (paradoxically) due to the lack of legitimacy and accessibility of the Conservative Party.

Overall this thesis will look at power and influence over policy in education and local government. It has three main aims. The first is to describe the workings of an important part of the education system at a time of great stress. It will examine Adapting to Change from the setting up of the working party to examine falling school rolls in Strathclyde (early in 1986) until the closure of the first affected schools (in the summer of 1988). The setting up of the review of schools, the measures used to evaluate schools, the review process, proposals and results of proposals will be considered. The second aim is to consider some of the

major analytical concepts used in the literature of power and policy making. Pluralism, corporatism, centralism and the positions of professionals will be examined. Consideration will also be given to the involvement of pupils, parents, teachers, trades unions, the Roman Catholic Church, councillors and central government in order to evaluate their power and influence within the system. The third aim is to add to the knowledge of Scottish educational policy making, developing from the contributions of Humes[2] and McPherson and Raab.[3] Humes has proposed the existence of a 'Leadership Class' within Scottish education while McPherson and Raab, considering the system over a long period of time, have suggested that power and influence are more fluid and change according to type of issue and over time. This thesis will consider both contributions. It will propose that Scottish education has resisted pressures for change from central government as a result of the Conservative Party's inability to 'unsettle' or the Scottish political and educational system. These aims will be considered fully in chapter 2.

As a subsidiary aim it is hoped that the study will be of some practical use outside academic circles. The literature on Scottish educational policy making concentrates on the higher echelons of Scottish education and little has been written about the local level. In this thesis topics will be explored such as the campaign tactics of groups opposed to closure and the opinions of councillors and officials on the conduct of a rationalisation programme.

The task will be tackled as follows. Chapter 1 will describe the history, administration and political background of Strathclyde. This is essential to an understanding of the mechanics of Adapting to Change. It will then

explore the demography behind the issue, looking at the details of the 'dip' and its effect on schools. The political background at UK, Scottish and Strathclyde level will be considered. These electoral and broader political facets, along with demographic forces, were the arms of the pincer which squeezed councils.

Chapter 2 considers some approaches from social policy literature to power and influence in educational policy making. It examines some of the key concepts used by theorists, such as pluralism, partnership, centralism and corporatism. It further considers the role of officials in policy making and explores issues of professionalism and corporate management. In a Scottish context it critically examines two particular contributions to the distinctively Scottish literature. This chapter is central to the thesis and ideas from it will be used as starting points for development in later chapters.

Chapter 3 examines the rationale and methods of the thesis and looks in more detail at why Adapting to Change will shed light on the theoretical concepts within the work. Sources of information are detailed and their strengths and shortcomings considered. The methods of investigation are discussed and some difficulties in data collection explored.

Chapters 4 and 5 review the conduct of Adapting to Change. Chapter 4 considers the planning of the process and looks at its results in one area, Paisley. Paisley is important because, while it was typical in most ways of areas reviewed, it was also politically controversial and attracted central government intervention. Further, Paisley was a town with great

experience of school closure debates and with a strong identity. As such it provides an example of a 'system' of schools. Chapter 5 looks at Glasgow North West which again was typical at school level of the experience of areas throughout Strathclyde. This area did not have a coherent identity and as a result was more of a collection of parts than Paisley. Glasgow North West illuminates well particular issues such as the position of the schools in severely deprived areas, the denominational sector and single-sex education. In order to extend the scope of the research chapter 5 also considers Adapting to Change as it affected two other areas; Bridgeton/Dalmarnock and East Kilbride.

In this thesis it is argued that to gain a full understanding of Adapting to Change questions of biography, group allegiance and intent must be considered. Chapter 6 looks at the issue from the points of view of the participants and explores positions taken up by individuals and groups. Particular attention is given, using interview material, to the contributions of senior councillors.

Chapter 7 takes the empirical information from chapters 4, 5 and 6 and uses it to reconsider theoretical issues described in chapter 2. Consideration will be give to the extent of power sharing in Adapting to Change and a reevaluation will be made of power and influence within the Scottish educational system, developing from issues raise by Humes and by McPherson and Raab. In addition the impact of Conservative ideology and government legitimacy will be discussed.

Until the 1980's there had been a tendency for writings on the Scottish education system to be descriptive, celebratory, or both. However in the

eighties a body of literature developed which took a much more critical view of the system. It is hoped that the present work will add to this 'revisionist' critique of Scottish education. It will be argued that with the development of large local authorities following regionalisation the balance of power between councillors, officials and central government altered significantly and that this alteration was achieved by the dilution of the 'professional' contribution to educational policy planning. Politicians, it will be suggested, became more powerful and a tense balance of power between central and local government developed in the most politicised areas of education. This restricted officials' influence to agenda formation. The balance of power between central, local government and interest groups is crucial to the existence and development of democracy. Further the interplay of political and educational influence on policy making affects the shape and equity of the system. It also moulds the public service which is central to the future of the country. It is hoped that the following chapters will contribute to a greater understanding of these issues. As Sue Innes writes,

> "But why does this matter, at least outside what I suppose we now call the 'research community'? The short answer is because knowledge is power. Turn that round and lack of knowledge means you can't even begin to create effective change when you don't even know the parameters of the problem. Good research is vital for policy development...gathering and disseminating knowledge play a vital role in this poor, tattered but unutterably valuable thing we call democracy."[4]

[1] See Hewton, E. (1986) *Education in Recession: Crisis in County Hall and Classroom,* (London, George Allen & Unwin).

[2]Humes, W. (1986) *The Leadership Class in Scottish Education,* (Edinburgh, John Donald).

[3] McPherson, A. and Raab, C. (1988) *Governing Education: A Sociology of Policy since 1945,* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press).

[4] *Scotland on Sunday,* 29 May 1994.

Chapter 1. Adapting to Change: The Background

1.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the important factors which were in place as Strathclyde planned to tackle the results of falling school rolls. The impetus came from a pincer movement in which education was squeezed between demography and politics. In order to understand Adapting to Change it is important to examine briefly three areas. These are the development and organisation of Strathclyde Regional Council, the demographic changes which reduced rolls and key factors in national and local politics which affected the West of Scotland in the mid-eighties.

The chapter begins with an outline of Strathclyde's geography and history followed by a description of the administration, with particular emphasis on education. Discussion of the history and administrative structure is essential to understanding contextual questions raised by later chapters. Then the demographic 'dip' in the numbers of school-age children is considered as is its impact on schools. The demographic statistics in themselves are of interest but without an examination of the complex effects of roll contraction on schools, simplistic conclusions could be drawn and the concerns and and arguments of supporters of schools threatened by closure might not be understood. The other half of the pincer movement, the political, is then considered. First, the political issues connected with school closure are discussed and then the wider political scene in the 1980's is examined. Again understanding of this is fundamental to this thesis as without it the pressures on the politicians would not be understood. The discussion will concentrate on the period between the election of the Conservative government in 1979 and the

end of the first phase of Adapting to Change in 1988. The period is of great interest because it saw the 'demographic dip' have effect at a time of political upheaval. On a UK scale many of the post-war institutions beloved of the Labour Party were being dismantled. At the same time in Scotland, a political reappraisal was underway of the constitutional position of the post-devolution Labour-voting but Conservative ruled country.[1]

The demography and politics (UK and Scottish) of the time have both attracted much academic interest but the paucity of work on Strathclyde Regional Council, the largest local authority in Great Britain is notable.[2] Despite this Strathclyde makes an excellent case study. The demographic and political factors described in this chapter were not unique to Strathclyde but in that region many of them were magnified. Other local authorities were large and powerful, but none as large and powerful as Strathclyde; others had Labour majorities but none as large as Strathclyde; the drop in the numbers of school-age children affected the whole of Scotland, but was particularly acute in Strathclyde; Strathclyde had the largest Directorate and a cohort of councillors who were very powerful within the Labour Party nationally. The scale of roll decline and the political and administrative power of the region led Strathclyde to face the issue head-on. The sparks from the resulting collision illuminate much in the field of local government policy making.

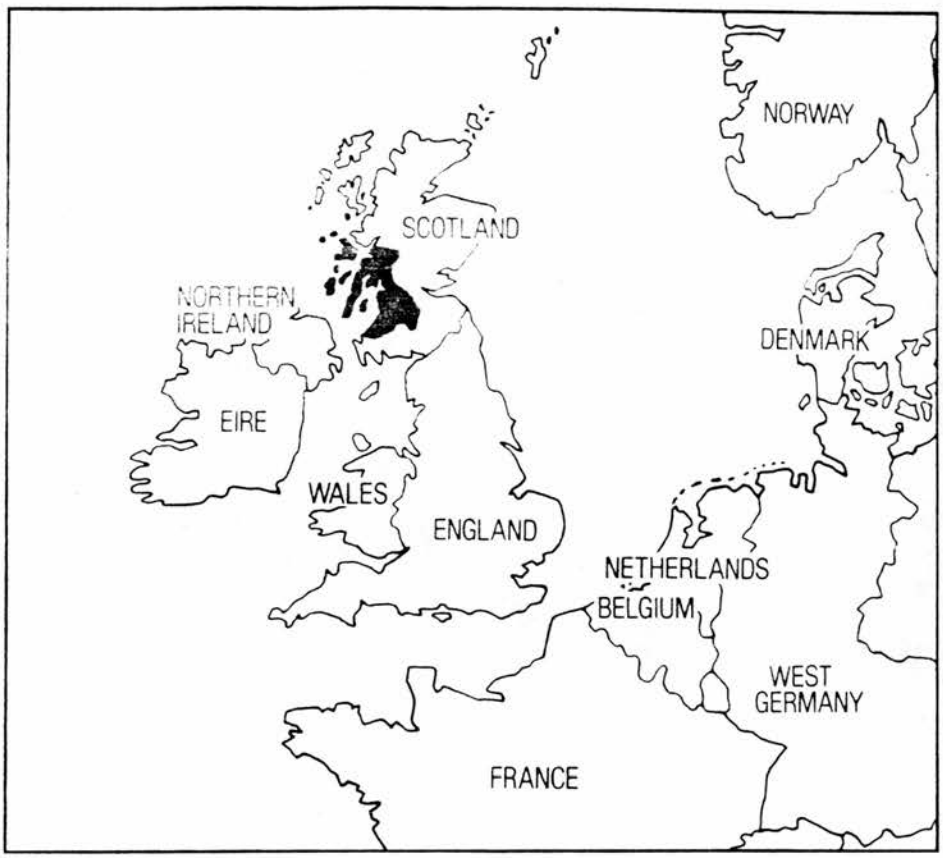
1.2 The History and Geography of Strathclyde Region

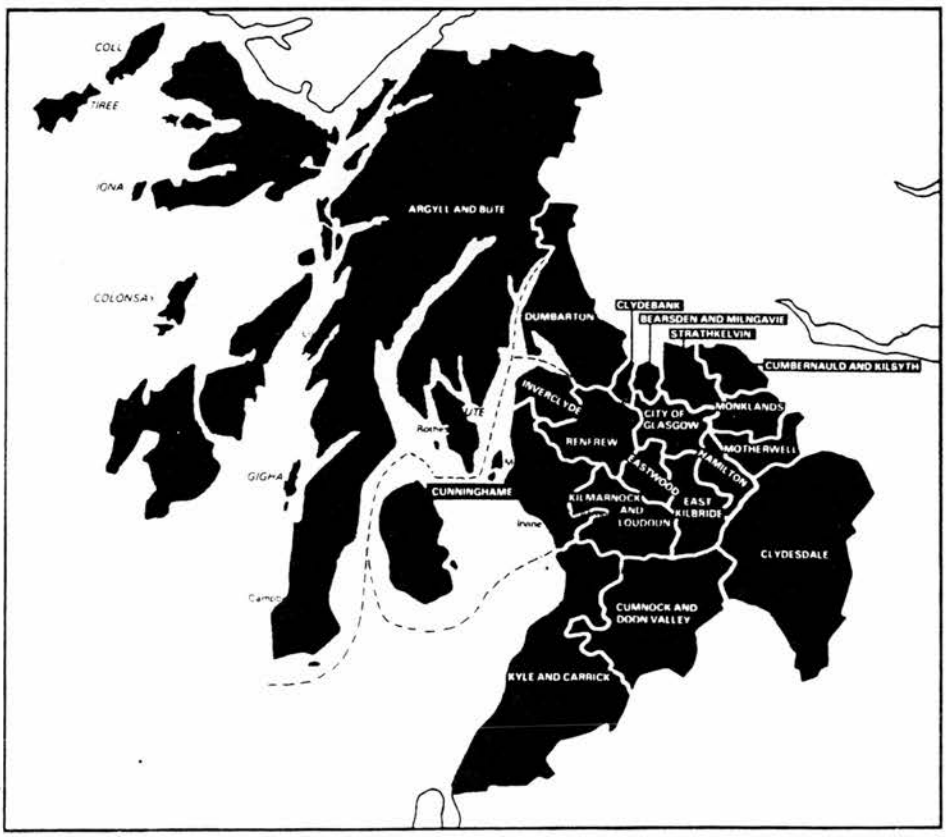
The establishment of the contemporary system of local government in Scotland involved a process of enquiry and legislation. In the 1960's two Royal Commissions on local government were set up; the Redcliffe-

Maud Commission for England (Cmnd 4040)[3] and the Wheatley Commission for Scotland (Cmnd 4150).[4] The new structures were established by Acts of Parliament, Scotland's being the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.[5] The first regional elections took place in May 1974 and the transfer from the old authorities was completed in May 1975. Scotland was split into nine regions which had control of functions and services including education, social work, police, the fire service, roads and major planning. Fifty three District Councils were created which exercised control over a range of services including housing, libraries, parks and recreation and cleansing. In addition three single-tier authorities providing all the above services were created to serve the island communities of the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland.

By far the largest of the Scottish authorities was Strathclyde Regional Council. Its area was 13,850 square kilometres[6] with a population in 1981 of 2,400,000 representing just less than half of the total population of Scotland. Strathclyde brought together seven previous counties including the most and least populous; the City of Glasgow and the islands of Bute (see figure 1.1) The Region was geographically and socially diverse containing sparsely populated highland and island communities and Scotland's great industrial conurbation centred around Glasgow. 1,730,000 people lived in the conurbation representing 75% of the population of Strathclyde and 34% of the population of Scotland.[7] Strathclyde was not a coherent physical unit and had little natural focus. The Region's geology dictated a fragmentation into at least three major structural divisions- Western Highlands and Islands, Central or Midland Valley and Southern Uplands. [8]

Figure 1.1 Strathclyde Region
(Source: Strathclyde Regional Council)





From the inception of Strathclyde Region there was considerable opposition to the new order and this opposition continued until around 1978-79. Strathclyde attracted the criticism of being a 'bureaucratic monster' and was felt by some to be too big, too remote from its outlying areas and poorly coordinated with the district councils.[9]

Socially the Region contained communities ranging from the affluent commuter belt on the fringes of Glasgow to inner-city areas which suffered from the worst social deprivation in Scotland. Economically in the 1980's, statistics on income and unemployment showed Scotland faring badly in UK terms, Strathclyde faring badly in Scottish terms and Glasgow faring badly in Strathclyde terms. [10] In Strathclyde's urban areas there was a lower rate of economic activity than the Scottish average amongst males but a higher rate than the regional average amongst females. Butt[11] suggests that this points in Glasgow to high dependence on state benefits and (often low) wages for females employed in the service sector. He reviews studies which suggest that about one third of the City of Glasgow consists of areas of multiple deprivation. Statistics also showed Glaswegians as being low on most measures of good health. A Greater Glasgow Health Board report[12] surveyed the city over a ten-year period and noted that it had the highest death rate for adults in the developed world. Heart disease, cancer, stomach disorders and accidents were the main causes.

Educationally the Region had the highest percentage of any Scottish education authority (27%in 1984/5) leaving with no SCE qualifications,[13] one of the lowest percentages of pupils attaining three or more Higher Grade passes,[14] the highest truancy rates[15] and the highest percentage of

pupils receiving free school meals.[16] All statistics show Strathclyde to be top of the social deprivation league. Within the Region the figures were consistently worse for the urban divisions, particularly Glasgow and Lanark.

1.3 Regional Administration

(i) The Politicians and Committee Structure

Detailed examination of the administration of Strathclyde is outwith the scope of this study but a broad outline of the official working of the Council will be given. According to the Region's own documents,

> "The ultimate responsibility for decision making in the Regional Council lies with the councillors, the democratically elected representatives of the people of Strathclyde."[17]

There were 103 electoral divisions containing from ten to twenty thousand electors. The Council used a committee structure common to local authorities of the time. A comprehensive scheme of delegation allowed committees to make final decisions in many cases without reference to the full Council. Committee minutes were submitted to the full Council as information (for delegated items) or for approval (for non-delegated items). Only items having major expenditure implications or contentious items which had been challenged by a certain proportion of a committee had to be passed to the full Council. The most important committee was the Policy and Resources Committee which established guidelines for the various service committees, developed the corporate strategy for the Council, allocated resources and monitored efficiency of the various departments. All political parties were represented on each committee and each councillor was a member of either the Education or

Social Work committee and at least two others. The most senior councillors i. e. the Convener, the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council, were ex officio members of all committees. The Council also had a number of sub and special committees ranging from the nine member Policy and Resources Sub-Committee on Overseas Development to the twenty four member Education (Schools) Sub-Committee. There were also various 'short life' committees set up for specific purposes such as the European City of Culture Steering Committee and those based on geographical interests such as the Rural Areas Sub-Committee. There were in fact no fewer than 113 committees in operation in the late 1980's reflecting the size and complexity of Strathclyde.

In the period under study an increasing use was being made of groups which contained both councillors and officials. These member/officer groups had a variety of remits such as care of offenders, Children's Panels, and post-compulsory education. In fact it was such a group which is at the centre of this thesis, i.e. the group which was set up to study the issue of falling school rolls. According to the Region,

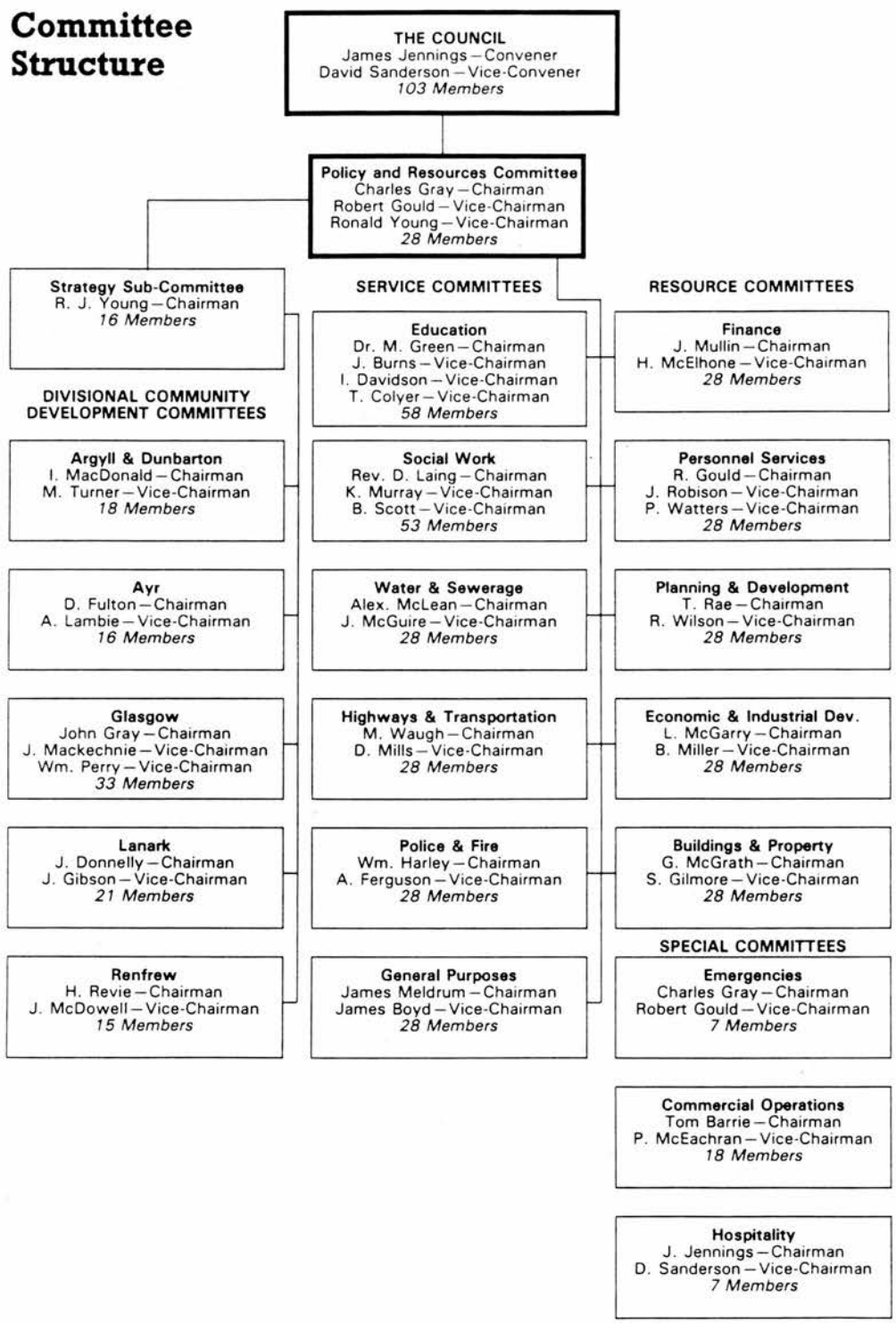
"Being free from the restrictions of committee agendas, the member/officer groups tackle the problems informally and flexibly-giving councillors and officials a chance to come to grips with problems-gaining new insights and encouraging new ideas and solutions."[18]

During this period the Region's committees operated as shown on figure 1.2.[19]

(ii) Senior Councillors.

The two senior positions within the Council were those of Convener and Leader of the Council. The Convener was the figurehead and was an

Figure 1.2 Strathclyde Regional Council: Committee Structure
(Source: Strathclyde Regional Council)



elected member nominated to act as chairman of the Council. He (always male at time of writing) attended local, national and international occasions on behalf of the Council and acted as host to important visitors. He was also a member of all committees.

The Leader of the Council chaired the Policy and Resources Committee, was a member of all committees and was chair of the majority political group. This made the Leader the most powerful politician in the Region firstly as the Policy and Resources Committee was the most important committee and secondly because the most important decisions were made within the Labour Party before reaching the Council. Both the Convener and Leader had deputes. Also powerful within the Council were the chairmen of various committees. These chairs carried prestige to varying degrees, with Education and Social Work being particularly sought after.

(iii) Overall Management Structure.

Because of the size of the Region, six divisions were created for administrative purposes.These were based on the old counties and the headquarters of the divisions were mostly in the old county towns. The divisions were (with 1987 estimated populations) Glasgow Division (715,621), Renfrew Division (354,862), Lanark Division (500,901), Dunbarton Division (320,664), Ayr Division (374,752) and Argyll and Bute Division (65,737).[20] Had the divisions themselves been regions Glasgow would have been Scotland's largest local authority. As education authority for almost half of Scotland, Strathclyde was responsible for the schooling of more than 400,000 children between the ages of five and sixteen, as well as post-compulsory students in school and further

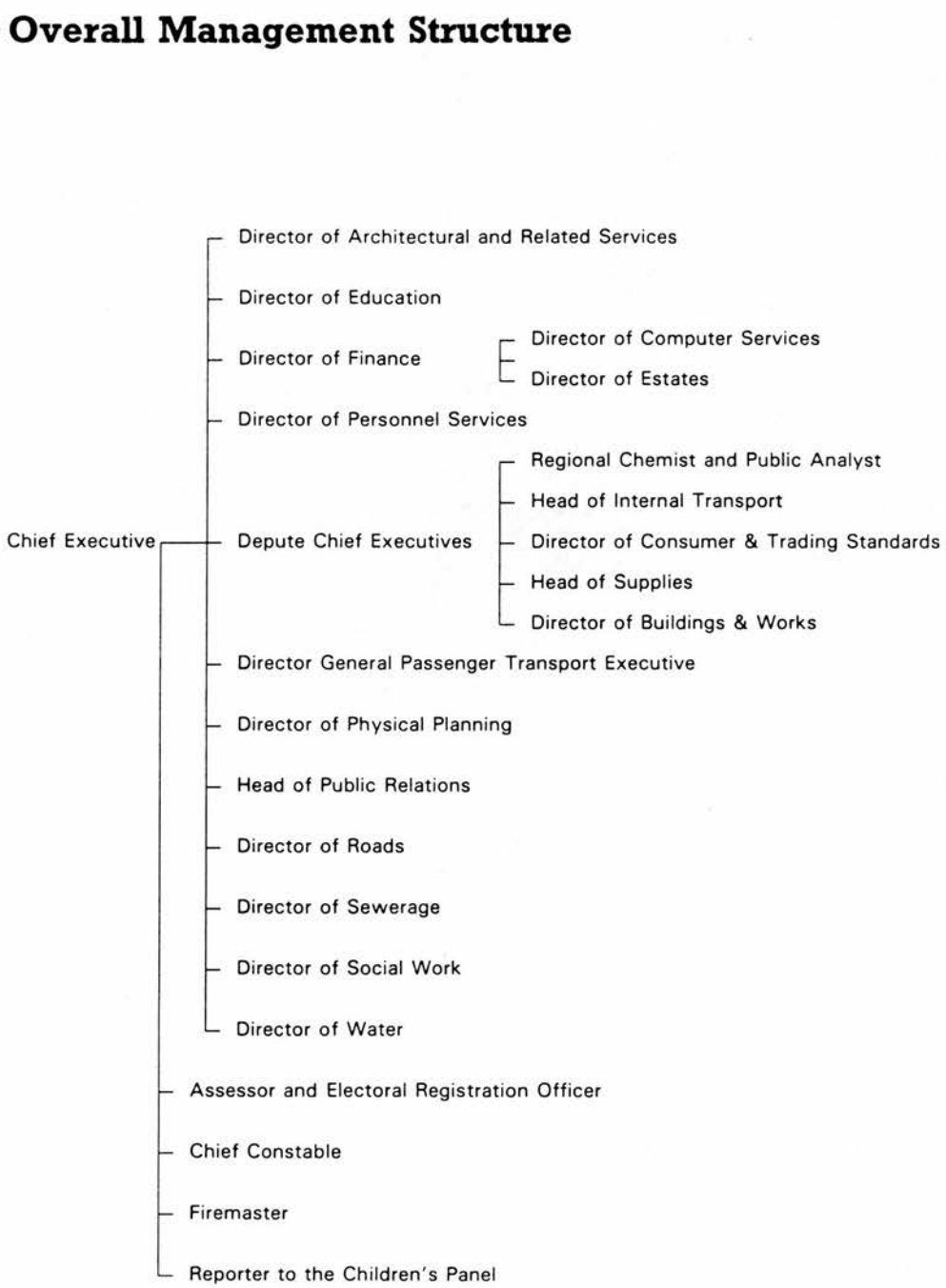
education. The Region ran more than 1,000 primary schools, 192 secondary schools and 147 special schools for children with different types of handicap, 20 colleges of further education, and a large and varied pre-school and community education sector (parts of which were run jointly by Education and Social Work Departments).[21] The management of the Region by officials was arranged in most instances in parallel to the committee structure as shown on figure 1.3.[22] The Chief Executive of the Council was the senior official and each of the other departments was headed by an official who was either designated a director, or head of department or by some other traditional title such as Chief Constable or Firemaster. The Chief Executive was the Council's chief policy adviser and the official link between the the officials and elected members. The Chief Executive's Department had a range of coordinating remits which gave it influence in many areas but particularly in promoting overall policies and coordinating cross-departmental initiatives. The Chief Executive had seniority over the directors of all departments.[23]

(iv) The Education Committee and the Education Department

Central to this study is the position of education. The educational functions of the regions were delegated to the Education Committee. The principal obligations of the authority as regards education were set out in the Education (Scotland) Act of 1980, a consolidating Act which brought together existing statutes and was supplemented by the Education Scotland Act of 1981. The 1980 Act [Para.1(1)] stated that;

" ..it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education and further education."[24]

Figure 1.3 Strathclyde Regional Council: Overall Management Structure
(Source: Strathclyde Regional Council)



Education Committees were required to be set up by law and had a wide number of powers and obligations within the education legislation. The Act also stated [Section 78] that the education authority should employ a director of education as the chief education officer of the authority.[25] Education Committees were unique in that, unlike other committees, they did not consist only of councillors but included teachers' representatives and representatives of churches. The Strathclyde Education Committee of the late 1980's consisted of 53 elected councillors, two teachers' representatives, and one representative each from the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church and one representing all the other churches (at that point a minister of the Free Church of Scotland).[26] The committee was presided over by a chairman and a vice-chairman both of whom were senior councillors occupying posts which carried great prestige as education was considered the most important remit.

At a senior administrative level the service was run by a Directorate who were a body of officers drawn from the education professions. Members of the Directorate were employed both centrally in Regional Headquarters and in the headquarters of the sub-regions. The Directorate consisted of a Director of Education, five depute directors, six assistant directors and a head of the pre-fives unit (at assistant director level). These officials were all based in the Regional Council headquarters in Glasgow.

In addition the Region employed six divisional education officers (holding equivalent rank to depute director of education),[27] one in each of the sub-regions. Assisting these divisional education officers were senior

education officers and education officers allocated broadly in proportion to the population of the sub-region. These officials were responsible for giving advice to elected members, acting as official correspondents for the authority, controlling teaching and ancillary staff and also overseeing the supply of materials, transport arrangements, school meals and the upkeep of buildings.

Headteachers were part of the management structure of the service but their place in the hierarchy was never clear, particularly *vis a vis* the Directorate. As Humes observes, traditionally headteachers in Scotland enjoyed a fair amount of autonomy in such matters as the curriculum, disciplinary arrangements and internal management structures.[28] Humes describes difficulties in the relationship between the Directorate and schools in general and head teachers in particular. Many headteachers were of the opinion that they had authority over their own school and were not inclined to yield that authority, especially to junior members of the Directorate who had responsibility for a particular part of the education service but who were often less experienced and certainly less well paid than the headteachers of medium to large sized secondary schools. At a meeting of Strathclyde Regional Council in 1984, the Chairman, reflected the increasing, and increasingly resisted pressure towards a corporate system of line management when he stated that,

"The days of the autonomy and autocracy of the individual headteacher are dead and will not be revived."[29]

Overall the Directorate remained an important element in the planning and implementation of Adapting to Change, and its influence was potentially great because of its reasonably consistent adoption of a

uniform policy and its easy access to the most powerful politicians. The positions and influence of the various parties, and the fact that officials were not central in policy making during Adapting to Change, will be discussed in chapter 6.

1.3 The Demographic Situation

The major causal factor of Adapting to Change was the decline in pupil numbers which worked through the Scottish school system from the early nineteen seventies until the early nineteen nineties.[30] During this period there was a downturn in pupil numbers entering various stages of education after decades of continued expansion. The bare facts are that the number of primary pupils in Scotland decreased from a peak in 1973 of 636,000 to 433,000 in 1987 [31] which meant that there were just over 68% of the number of pupils in primary schools in 1987 that there had been fifteen years before. This slump in numbers was mirrored six years later in the secondary sector where 1991 numbers (projected 290,000) were around two thirds of 1978 numbers (410,000). After these troughs in both sectors numbers were projected to increase at a modest rate towards the end of the century and beyond.[32]

This drop in numbers could be interpreted as having simply led to a reverse of the expansion from 1945 to the early 70's. In that period the trend was for more children to be taught in more schools by more teachers. The decline in pupil numbers presented various options, the simplest of which was that fewer children would lead to fewer teachers and schools. The picture was however extremely complicated and some of these complications will be examined below.

Firstly the reliability of population statistics and projections must be considered. Accurate predictions could be made of the numbers of pupils entering a particular sector of education when the children have been born but for unborn children predictions are less reliable. Adler and Bondi [33] comment on the poor state of population projections, pointing out that end of century projections for the United Kingdom have varied from 50 million to 70 million. In 1977 the Government's Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS) published a report which stated that,

"...projections are not predictions or forecasts and should not be treated as such. " [34]

This may be a fine point but it is hard to argue that a local authority should not take account of these projections and use them to some extent as predictions. The CPRS report identified three factors to be taken into account in preparing projections; fertility, migration and mortality. Of these only mortality has proved reasonably predictable and variations in the other two are the reasons given for the oscillating range of general and particular population projections in earlier government documents. This document gave for the first time different variant projections of population as well as central projections, the variants making assumptions that birth rates would be lower or higher than those thought to be most likely.[35] Appropriate caution is signalled in the use of projections but there is a sense in which making the target larger for the 'projectors' makes a 'correct' result within the extremes more likely. On the other hand it is less than helpful to those who have to base policy on projections. For instance what is the planner to make of projections of the Scottish population which go from a central figure of 5.9 million to a low variant of 4.5 million? [36] The variation to the educational planner

could could lead to over or under-provision for Scotland of forty average-sized secondary schools.

These difficulties are compound in educational planning at local level. Goodwyn and McCleery see migration as causing particular difficulties in any attempt to project or predict local population.[37] Additional problems such as the time lag between information gathering and dissemination make the process of projection of less use to educational planning than it seems at first sight. In particular, as Goodwyn and McCleery point out, the ten year gap between censuses is too long and there is a need for gathering local data in intervening years.[38] Some authorities have developed such a capacity but Simpson and Lancaster state that half of local education authorities in the United Kingdom had no written account of their prediction procedures and that one third of LEA's in Britain did not use computers in their prediction of pupil numbers. They question how sophisticated local predictions were even when methods of producing them did exist. [39] Simpson and Lancaster further argue that forecasts should be judged not on their accuracy alone but by their appropriate place in the planning process. [40] Given the short time between the gathering of data on births and the need to be prepared for primary entrants this is crucial.

The prediction of pupil numbers is therefore problematic even when only taking into account raw data, but social planning in general and educational planning in particular is influenced by more than population projections; wider social trends are of crucial importance. For Goodwyn and McCleery the stability of the population, movement of people at home-forming stage and the increase in the numbers of households have

all had their effects.[41] The increase in the number of households in Britain in the eighties reflected the growing numbers of single-parent families and the tendency of young adults to form separate households at an early stage. Further, as Eversley points out, more educational resources are needed to take account of increasing numbers of surviving handicapped children and increasing numbers of children whose first language is not English. [42] Eversley sees a general increase in disadvantage and writes,

"...an examination of all factors involved would lead us to assume that the decline in crude numbers of children in the relevant age groups could not have much effect on the need for total provision. The other factors at work are much more likely to increase the amount required per capita, in line with trends of earlier years."[43]

Other social trends affect school rolls. For example staying-on rates in Scotland rose sharply in the early eighties and levelled off in the nineties.[44] Girls stayed on longer than boys and there were great variations across Scotland with Glasgow having particularly low staying-on rates.[45] Rural staying-on rates were higher than urban staying-on rates and there was a tendency for West of Scotland pupils to go to university at the end of the fifth year if they achieved sufficient qualifications whereas similar pupils in other parts of Scotland were more likely to complete a sixth year.[46] Hubback argues that the number of jobs, rates of pay in the economy and the level of perceived advantage of entering higher education will effect staying-on rates.[47]

Changes in pupil numbers at various stages also differed across religion and class. For instance there was a disproportionate fall in the numbers of children in Roman Catholic schools in Strathclyde in the

period under consideration. The greater involvement of further education colleges and youth employment projects in post-compulsory education and training also was important and so while demographic factors were central, the shortcomings of population forecasting and the impact of other policies made the affect of falling rolls less than clear cut.

1.4 Impact of Falling Rolls on Schools.

Educational policy literature focuses on the difficulties caused by falling school rolls, and this is reflected in the press coverage of school closure issues. However, benefits may also be gained from falling pupil numbers. In this section the effects of falling rolls will be examined under three headings; curriculum, teachers and buildings. Here issues resulting from reduced rolls, many of which were raised during Adapting to Change, will be examined.

(i) Curriculum and In-School Organisation

At the most basic level falling rolls meant fewer pupils. One of the most common complaints of teachers, parents and pupils during this period was that classes were too large so the decline in numbers could be looked on as a simple benefit.[48] Local authorities and central government were, however, reluctant to see numbers fall without some fall in expenditure and the result was a pressure to reduce the number of classes rather than the numbers in classes. In primary schools this was often done by reducing the number of classes at a particular level (i.e. reducing from three primary 6 classes to two) or more controversially by 'compositing' classes, that is having classes containing pupils from more than one year cohort of primary education. In secondary schools the number of sections in a particular subject was often reduced, the number

of subjects often cut and groups of pupils attempting different levels of a subject were often taught in the same class (for instance Higher and CSYS candidates may have been taught in a single class where the numbers for CSYS were deemed too small to justify a separate class). In general, year groups were smaller than in previous years in most Scottish schools, and this contraction and the decline in the number of teachers (gentler *pro rata* than that of pupils) led to time-tabling complications. Briault and Smith noted that smaller schools in general need lower pupil teacher ratios than larger schools to maintain the curriculum[49] since the same pupil teacher ratio allows a richer curriculum in a large school than in a smaller school.[50] It must be stressed that, as Briault and Smith point out, the problems of a school with a falling roll are not the same as those experienced by a small school with a steady roll.[51] Smaller year groups, according to Briault and Smith, lead to problems in differentiating by ability [52] and can, in the senior years, lead to lack of stimulation in language and social subjects. In addition Eversley states that there is no evidence that smaller groups produce better results. [53] Lack of numbers available in sport and recreational pursuits was another problem and this was exacerbated because the numerical decline was not spread evenly throughout schools but was concentrated in certain years. At the beginning of the decline schools tended to be 'top heavy'.

Many positive aspects, which arose from the decline in pupil numbers, were observed in the late eighties. These included, smaller class sizes particularly in the senior years of the secondary sector, increased opportunities for team teaching and increased time for giving help to individual pupils. There was also the release of classroom space which was used for purposes such as the expansion of computing

departments, the provision of departmental work areas or 'bases' and the provision of social areas for pupils or increasing numbers of adult students.

(ii) Teachers

For teachers demography had an effect both on the number of teachers needed and the number available.[54] In the era of expanding rolls, a major problem was staffing schools and there was an expansion in the number and size of colleges of education and in the number of recruits to teaching. In contrast, the seventies and eighties saw the closures of Hamilton, Callander Park and Craiglockart Colleges of Education, the mergers of Aberdeen and Dundee Colleges of Education and of Dunfermline and Moray House Colleges of Education. The remaining colleges offered far fewer places and prepared teachers in fewer subjects. According to Scottish Education Department figures there were teacher surpluses at primary level and in almost all secondary subjects, and re-entry to the system was particularly difficult for women who in the past had been able to take career breaks.[55] One solution,proposed by Hubback, to these surpluses was the movement of teachers between sectors, but this was not easy in Scotland because of the separate training and different qualifications in the two sectors.[56] The decline in recruitment meant that the teaching force was aging. This ended the difficulty of schools which had large numbers of inexperienced teachers but, on the other hand, it led to a lack of new blood, ideas and members of the teaching force with recent experience of school as pupils or of work outside teaching.

The spate of promotions in the sixties and seventies of relatively young people meant that promotion blocks were created. For instance,

headships filled by forty year-olds would not be vacated for perhaps twenty years. Though there were attempts to address these problems with innovations such as 'Senior Teacher' posts, the large number of teachers of a similar age was a problem for the ambitious. These factors combined with a decline in the faith of the public, and of many teachers, in the ability of education to promote social change led to a lack of optimism in the teaching force in the eighties. Writers such as Briault and Smith see the demoralisation of teachers in schools in decline as a central issue and one which deserves further study.[57]

(iii) Buildings

Building supply is an area where there was agreement on the benefits of falling school rolls. Decline in pupil numbers released space within schools and the infamous Scottish 'hut' or temporary (or originally intended to be temporary) classroom was reduced in number. "Adapting to Change" argued that moderate roll decline could offer substantial opportunities for the provision of specialist accommodation such as music and art rooms, resource bases,[58] social areas for senior pupils and adults, units for disruptive children and staff bases.[59] Even with these positive points it remained true that the ratio of money spent on teaching and learning to money spent on buildings was decreasing with Strathclyde seeing an ever increasing proportion spent on cleaning, janitorial and maintenance work. [60] Regions which had Roman Catholic schools were acutely affected because the roll decline in these was particularly dramatic and sometimes led to an area having two schools where, in the opinion of the local authority, it did not have the combined roll to fill one. Roll decline helped lead to Strathclyde Region being the second highest spender on buildings and second lowest *per capita* on

pupils in Scotland. [61]

Gains and losses in the late eighties were possible depending to a great extent on how falling school rolls were managed politically. This political management is the central issue in this thesis and some general considerations affecting all authorities are examined below.

1.5 The Politics of School Closure.

The demographic issues surrounding the trends of the period under consideration have been dealt with above in a descriptive manner with little reference to political controversies. There was, of course, much political controversy.

Many commentators note that a 'psychology of expansion' was apparent in post war years. For instance Taylor comments,

"These expectations of growth and all that goes with them are such a ubiquitous part of our contemporary consciousness that it is important to remind ourselves how rapid and recent it has all been." [62]

Though the system was slow to see changes coming, as Briault and Smith suggest,[63] the expectation of continued expansion within the education system increasingly became a thing of the past. This came firstly through the experience of falling rolls affecting most schools and secondly because of media coverage of closure issues.

While expansionist psychology may have changed, the political responses to falling rolls were less than harmonious. At central government level, as Adler, Petch and Tweedie[64] point out, two mutually

exclusive objectives were being pursued. The first was of saving money and the second the provision for parental choice both in terms of providing opportunity to choose schools under the Education (Scotland) Act 1981 and, subsequently, in interventions to keep schools such as Paisley Grammar open. As will be discussed in Chapter 4 the government was able to satisfy these conflicting demands by leaving the local authorities to get on with the unpleasant job of school rationalisation whilst supporting those schools felt to be particularly worthy of retention for ideological or political reasons. The Scottish Education Department, unlike the Department of Education and Science (whose advice tended to concern teacher numbers rather than buildings according to Walsh et. al.),[65] seemed happy to sit on the fence amid confusion over falling school rolls. The slow demise of unpopular schools had been the preferred option. Until the late eighties school closures, particularly in the secondary sector, were few and far between. For instance 1985/6 saw a decrease of 4.5 per cent in numbers of secondary pupils but no secondary school closures.[66]

In the prevailing economic and political climate, several options were available to local education authorities. The first was to use demographic factors to reduce class sizes, get rid of temporary accommodation and in general improve education by spending the same amount on fewer pupils. There was no reason, according to Taylor, for falling rolls to mean contraction in the quality of provision.[67] The second option was to use the trends to save money by closing schools and reducing staff numbers. Given central government pressure and educational arguments it was likely that most authorities would close some schools either following a slow haphazard decline or a planned process. Using either method,

school closure proved a most difficult task for local authorities, particularly in middle class areas where anti-closure campaigns were often effective.[68]

Education officers were increasingly being asked difficult questions which could not be fudged. Questions such as what is the lowest number which makes a secondary school viable?; what is the acceptable size of a primary school?; what weight should be given to potential community use of schools and the role of the school as a community asset? were being asked at public meetings and in widely circulated consultations over school closures. Opinions on these questions seemed inconsistent across Scotland. Lothian and Strathclyde both stated that 800 was the minimum secondary roll for full curricular coverage, but both conceded that schools with well below 500 pupils could be tolerated.[69] Dumfries and Galloway upgraded two schools (one of 200 pupils and one of 150 pupils) to full six year status, partly because of what they saw as the great success of recent upgradings of schools only slightly larger than these. On the other hand some authorities, notably Grampian and Western Isles, announced closure programmes, particularly affecting small rural schools. Eversley stresses that, even in a period of demographic change, policy changes have much more effect than demographic variables. [70] He argues that demographic factors must not be ignored and preparation must be made for the future but suggests that the concern over the effects of falling school rolls springs from teachers mindful of their own interests. He does state that their concern has other causes [71] but as will be seen this teacher-promoted concern was not found in Strathclyde. This, as will be discussed in chapter 6, seems to have been in large part due to the 'no redundancy' policy of the Regional Council and to the lack of

opposition by teachers, who were often moved from closed schools in deprived areas to posts in more attractive areas. In Adapting to Change the most vociferous opposition to closures came from parents, not teachers.

1.6 The Political Background

In this section a brief attempt will be made to describe the political background to Adapting to Change. First a description will be made of the political situation in the United Kingdom. Scottish dimensions will also be examined and then the parallel situation in Strathclyde will be looked at.

(i) The United Kingdom Political Background

The overriding factor affecting the workings of local government in the 1980's was the political dominance of the Conservative Party electorally, in UK terms. The Conservative victory in 1979 and the subsequent Conservative wins in the 1983 and 1987 general elections ensured that there was a substantial period in which central government and Strathclyde Regional Council were of different political hues. With overall majorities in 1979 of 43, in 1983 of 144 and in 1987 of 102 the Conservative Party enjoyed a period with substantial parliamentary superiority and with no dependency even on conservative minded Unionist politicians from Ulster. Kavanagh states that in the 1970's the electorate was less successful than it had been in the past in producing parliamentary majorities. In 1974 the two general elections failed to produce a government majority sufficient to last for a full parliament, and in February 1974 there was a minority government for the first time since 1929. With increased support for the Alliance, Kavanagh writes that

changes in electoral behaviour reduced Labour-Conservative support among the electorate, but the electoral system protected the two party dominance in parliamentary seats.[72] There was therefore a sharp contrast between the eighties and the preceding two decades when the Labour Party was either in power or in a relatively strong parliamentary position.

Government policies of the period were generated by a combination of influences ranging from traditional Conservative interests in issues such as law and order and economic restraint to the growing influence of 'New Right' thinking which, as King notes, sought to reverse the trend towards the reduction of inequalities in the political, social and economic spheres which had been a feature of the politics of the post war years.[73] The Thatcher government entered office intent upon reducing the role of the state and the size of the public sector in Britain. The rationale for this came from classical liberal economics while monetarist theory promised an end to inflation. Reducing the Welfare State was intended to increase entrepreneurial drive in the economy and replace notions of collective welfare protection with individual and familial self-reliance and self-help. However, monetarist policies were neither sustained nor economically successful and aggregate public expenditure continued to rise. This led to the increasing use by Conservatives of arguments about social order, authority, self-reliance and the danger of 1960's values to justify the difficulties endured by many members of society. Even so there were a vast number of social changes due to government policies, some intended, some unintended and some forced by international economic influences. The position of the State changed dramatically with a reduction of emphasis on government-provided services and an increased role for the private sector. This led to an expansion of private

health care, maintenance of the numbers of children in private education in a time of dramatically falling rolls and privatisation of major companies such as British Telecom, the electricity companies and British Gas. Legislation resulted in a reduction in the power and influence of the Trades Unions and there was an increasing reduction in representatives from the Left in organisations such as health boards.

Of particular interest is the position in the eighties of local government. Changes in the power and position of local government were evident and many observers perceived a drift of power away from local authorities. This was shown by the removal of local government powers and functions to central government or to bodies such as Scottish Homes and the Manpower Services Commission. Additionally the erosion of control over services due to privatisation as with contracting-out of services and increasing emphasis on the power of the 'consumer' demonstrated loss of local authority power. In education the proposed creation of Technology Academies, devolution of power to school boards and 'opting out' legislation all indicated an intended reduction in power of the local authorities. This was compounded by the drift of power from education itself towards other sectors (notably the Treasury and the now defunct Manpower Services Commission) instanced by McPherson and Raab.[74] This downward trend in the power and influence of local authorities was also evident in the removal or exclusion of local authority representatives from public bodies such as Enterprise Scotland.

In the mid to late 1980's education was seen as a political issue as at no time since comprehensivisation in the mid sixties. The above developments were seen as serious threats to the system of the previous twenty years which had witnessed the consolidation of the

comprehensive system at a time of falling school rolls. Pressure on the regional councils was further mounted by the increased demands for some form of devolution following the Govan By-Election of 1989, which saw the Scottish National Party take a safe Labour seat at the same time as the Labour Party was increasingly divided on the devolution issue. This development was of particular importance to the Strathclyde Region because any move towards a national assembly called into question the need for a regional authority which served half of the population of Scotland. The old question of 1979 as to whether a Strathclyde Region and an assembly could coexist was increasingly voiced.

Of central government's plans for local government Newton and Karran claim that,

"Within weeks of taking office local government was strongly criticised by ministers who claimed that it was wasteful, profligate, irresponsible, unaccountable and out of control."[75]

The Conservative governments of the eighties endeavoured to reduce local authority spending and a key weapon in this was the reduction of the contribution of central government towards local authority expenditure.[76] Paradoxically the government's progress in reducing public expenditure was modest and an increasing proportion of of local spending was financed by asset sales. Overall in the period there was a modest increase in current expenditure combined with a sharper decrease in capital expenditure.[77] The Government retained its commitment to controlling local authority expenditure on its reelection in June 1983. The abolition of the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan counties in England, under the 1985 Local Government Act

and the introduction of rate-capping reflected this.[78] The introduction of the Community Charge or Poll Tax in the late eighties was a further example of the squeeze on local authorities as through it, the government sought to introduce a system of funding for local services by means of a flat rate of tax paid by each adult which was unrelated to ability to pay. The Right hoped that the overspending of councils would be reflected directly in the local community charge and that it would act as a powerful brake on the ambitions of spendthrift councils. These financial restrictions on local government combined with falling school rolls were the forces which precipitated Adapting to Change. As will be seen in subsequent chapters Strathclyde underplayed the financial pressures on their budgets in the school closure debates but they were as vulnerable to the changing economic wind as other councils.

(ii) The Scottish Political Background

In sharp contrast to many areas in the United Kingdom, Scotland in general and Strathclyde in particular were dominated by the Labour Party throughout the 1980's. The tables below show the strength of support for the Labour Party in Scotland.

Table 1.1 General Election Results (Scotland) 1979-87[79]

%vote (seats)

	Lab.	Cons.	Lib.	SNP
1979	41.5 (44)	31.4 (22)	9.0 (3)	17.3 (2)
1983	35.1 (41)	28.4 (21)	24.5(8)	11.7 (2)
1987	42.4 (50)	24.0 (10)	19.4 (9)	14.0 (3)

The table shows the political dominance of the Labour Party at the expense of all other political parties. The percentage of voters who supported the Party was in stark contrast to its wider UK standing as

shown by the 42.4% of votes in 1983 and 42.3% in 1987 which the Conservative Party gained across the UK as a whole. In Strathclyde in the 1987 General Election the Labour Party gained 53.3% of the votes to the Conservatives 19.3%. Support was even stronger in Glasgow with the Labour Party winning all eleven parliamentary seats with average majorities of almost 16,500 (the member for Glasgow Springburn won 73.6% of the popular vote in his constituency). The decline in support for the Conservative Party and the high level of support for the Labour Party, particularly when translated into numbers of seats, left Scotland with a political map which was unlike that of the rest of the UK, though there were similar patterns in industrial areas in the north of England, such as Liverpool.

This pattern was repeated at local elections, both for regional and district councils.

Table 1.2 Scottish Local Elections (1978-86) National Share of Vote by Party (%)[80]

	Lab	Cons	Lib./SDP	SNP	Ind.
1978	39.6	30.3	2.3	20.9	4.9
1980	45.4	24.1	6.2	15.5	6.7
1982	37.6	25.1	18.1	13.4	5.1
1984	45.7	21.4	12.8	11.7	6.8
1986	43.9	16.9	15.1	18.2	4.8

The local election results show a similar picture to the national election results and across the United Kingdom there was more support for the Labour Party in local elections than in general elections. There was an even higher support across Scotland in spite of the presence of a fourth strong political force in the shape of the Scottish National Party. In Strathclyde the tendency to support Labour was magnified, leading to local election support of 43.0% in 1978, 45.8% in 1982 and 52.6% in the

1986 Regional Council elections. In terms of Regional Council seats the Labour Party always, in the period under consideration, had more than 70 of the 103 seats on Strathclyde Regional Council. The Council which considered Adapting to Change consisted of 87 Labour councillors, 6 Conservative, 5 Liberal/SDP, 2 SNP and 3 independents.[81] In the urban areas there was even higher percentage support for Labour with 60% support for Labour in Glasgow in the mid eighties.[82] The contrast between the large Conservative majority at Westminster and the overwhelming Labour majority on Strathclyde Regional Council and among Scottish M.P.'s could scarcely have been greater. It was the most important factor in relations between central and local government. Strathclyde increasingly spoke in different political terms from the UK government and seemed to be drifting ever further away from prevailing UK norms.

(iii) Politics and Education

The overall political changes of the period were reflected in the education system. Dale[83] states that the opportunity for education to be affected by 'Thatcherism' was created by the coming together of various factors. He feels that the withering of the Welfare State consensus, growing unemployment, especially amongst young people, the failure of social democratic principles in producing equality and justice and a decline of faith in the state education system provided fertile ground for change. The results of the policies of the Conservative Government (and some of the changes promoted by the previous Labour Government) in education were wide ranging and often controversial. Differences in the form and presentation of reforms between Scotland and England and Wales are interesting and the issue of the receptiveness to the Conservatives within Scotland is one which will be examined in chapter

7.

Dale sees the changes in the Thatcher years as having three phases. The first phase was the revision of ideology in which an attempt was made to deal with education as it had evolved within existing systems. The second phase was an attempt by the use of TVEI and similar reforms to change structures and change the locus of control. The third phase, in which Dale particularly refers to the Education Reform Bill,[84] was that which attempted to make education much more a part of the market system. However it is clear that this phase started earlier in Scotland with the introduction of Parental Choice in the Education (Scotland) Act 1981. There was a consistent pattern to legislation which reduced the power and influence of the local authorities, the teaching unions and the state education system in general. Examples in England and Wales were the creation of City Technology Colleges; provisions for schools to opt out of local authority control; the introduction of a national curriculum and the introduction of devolved school management. Initiatives common to England and Wales and Scotland such as TVEI, the strengthening of the assisted places scheme and publication of examination results pointed in a similar direction as did the introduction of school boards, 5-14 initiatives (including national testing) and the attempted introduction of Technology Academies (analogous to City Technology Colleges) in Scotland. Dale states of the result,

"In essence, it creates a market system in education, but a market that is underpinned, guaranteed and protected by a less extensive but much more powerful state involvement."[85]

It would be untrue to say that all reforms during this period were

opposed by teachers. In particular there was wide support for curricular reforms such as Standard Grade and 5-14 developments,[86] though there were continuous protests about the pace of change and underfunding. However education in the 1980's reflected the political split in the United Kingdom in that central government and many of those involved in Scottish education were ideologically at odds and seemed to talk different educational languages. This was particularly the case for the unions, parents groups and the regions who were routinely in dispute with the Scottish Office over reforms.

While strife was increased, at least in Adapting to Change, by a combination of politics and personality, it will be seen in later chapters that not only the policies, but the way they were managed and presented to a largely hostile public, was crucial. While the analysis of structures is relatively straight-forward, how individuals engage in the policy making process is of crucial importance. The impact of personality in politics is one which is hard to gauge, but attempts will be made in chapter 6 to examine this.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has described the background to Adapting to Change examining the history and geography of Strathclyde Region and the basic organisation of the Council and its Education Department, the demographic 'dip' which precipitated Adapting to Change and the essential political factors in play nationally, locally and in terms of school closures. These elements all influenced the conduct of the exercise and are essential to understanding the more detailed study of the issue. The size of Strathclyde and its political make-up, heightened by the political

make up of Parliament provided a set of circumstances which provide insight into the power and processes involved in crucial decision making at a local, regional and Scottish level. The main participants were all put into positions which forced them to make difficult decisions based on pragmatic concerns rather than on ideals. It is this which made the issue important and illuminating. Scottish education has often seemed a closed world where the source and process of decision making is unclear. Adapting to Change is important because of its effect on pupils, parents and staff, and as a large scale administrative exercise, but also because a study of it offers a chance to examine a number of the key influences in the system at work in a more open way than was normal in smaller, more limited disputes. The Scottish Office, the Labour Party, the Directorate, the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the trades unions and parents were all key players in the life of the country and the insight offered by study of this issue extends beyond education and beyond Scotland.

The next chapter will consider power and influence over policy from a theoretical viewpoint, before a detailed examination of Adapting to Change is conducted. It will attempt to use concepts from wider social policy literature in order to inform later analysis.

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[16] Scottish Office Statistical Bulletin (Jan. 1987)11/M1/1987, p. 4, Table 2.

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[19] Ibid., p.14.

[20] Ibid., p.77.

[21] Strathclyde Regional Council (Undated c.1989), op. cit.

[22] Ibid., p.18.

[23] Interview with retired Strathclyde official.

[24] Education (Scotland) Act 1980, (HMSO, London).

[25] Ibid.

[26] Strathclyde Regional Council, *Handbook and Diary 1990/92* .

[27] Interview with retired Strathclyde Official.

[28] Humes (1986) op. cit., p. 122.

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[49]Briault,E. and Smith, F. (1980) *Falling Rolls in Secondary Schools,* (Windsor, National Foundation for Educational Research). p. 157.

[50]Ibid., p.386.

[51] Ibid., p.389.

[52] Ibid., p.157

[53]Eversley (1982) op. cit., p. 393.

[54] See Walsh, K., Dunne, R., Stoten, B. and Stewart, J. (1984) *Falling Rolls and the Management of the Teaching Profession,* (Windsor, National Foundation for Educational Research/ Nelson).

[55] Scottish Education Department (Dec. 1986) *Statistical Bulletin,* No. 6/C9/1986, (HMSO, Edinburgh).

[56] Hubback, op. cit., p. 23.

[57] Briault and Smith (1980) op. cit., p. 389.

[58] Hubback (1983) op. cit.

[59] Strathclyde Regional Council (Nov. 1986) op. cit., para. 4.13.

[60]Ibid., para 3.6

[61]Loc. cit.

[62]Taylor, W. (1981) 'Contraction in Context', in Simon, B. and Taylor, W., *Education in the Eighties,* (London,Batsford), p. 17.

[63]Briault and Smith (1980) op. cit., p. 21.

[64]Adler, M., Petch, A. and Tweedie, J. (1989) *Parental Choice and Educational Policy,* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press), ch.2.

[65]Walsh, K., Dunne, R., Stoten, B. and Stewart, J. (1985) 'Teacher Numbers: the Framework of Government Policy', in McNay, I and Ozga, J, *Policy Making in Education,* (Oxford, Pergamon), p. 251.

[66] Scottish Education Department, (Jul. 1987), *Statistical Bulletin,* No. 4/B1/1987, (HMSO, Edinburgh).

[67] Taylor (1981) op. cit., p. 18.

[68]Bondi, L. (1986) 'The Geography and Politics of Contraction in Local Education Provision', (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Manchester,1986), passim.

[69]See Strathclyde Regional Council (Nov. 1986), op. cit., para. 4.3., and Campbell, J. (1987) "The Attempted Reorganisation of Roman Catholic Secondary Education in West Lothian, 1984 to 1987' (Unpublished MEd Dissertation, University of Edinburgh).

[70]Ibid., p. 378.

[71]Ibid., p. 393.

[72]Kavanagh, D. (1990) *British Politics; Continuities and Change*, (Oxford,Oxford University Press).

[73]King, D. (1987) *The New Right:Politics, Markets and Citizenship*, (London, Macmillan). p.3.

[74]McPherson and Raab (1988), op. cit., ch. 20.

[75]Newton, K. and Karran, T. (1985) *The Politics of Local Expenditure* , (London, Macmillan), p 116.

[76]Stoker, G. (1988) *The Politics of Local Government*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan), p. 15.

[77]Stoker (1988) op. cit., p. 16.

[78]Hewton, E. (1986) *Education in Recession*, (London, Allen and Unwin), p. 76.

[79]Parry, R. (1988) *Scottish Political Facts*, (Edinburgh,T&T Clark).

[80]Parry (1986) op. cit., p. 124 with amendments.

[81]Ibid., p. 131.

[82]Ibid., p. 129.

[83]Dale, R. (1989) *The State and Education Policy*, (Milton Keynes, Open University Press), p. 78.

[84]Loc. cit.

[85]Op. cit., p. 106.

[86]Though teachers' organisations criticised the pace and funding of curriculum reform there was widespread acceptance of changes.

Chapter 2. A Theoretical Perspective

2.1 Introduction

In the Introduction the potential of Adapting to Change to shed light on educational policy making was indicated. Chapter 1 described the administrative, demographic and political framework within which this study is set.

Adapting to Change is of interest when looking at several aspects of educational policy making. First, it was central to the lives of the pupils, parents and teachers involved. Second, it offers lessons in the management of change in education. It can be seen as the culmination of large-scale local authority intervention which started in hope and finished in despair. This progression reflected an increasing loss of confidence by Strathclyde as political developments threatened its future. Third, a study of Adapting to Change offers insight on a theoretical level as it exposed much evidence of the use of power and influence in educational policy making. The discussion below will concentrate on the location and use of this power and influence. The fact that the issue was set in a period of contraction makes it particularly relevant especially since recent major works on Scottish educational policy by Humes and by McPherson and Raab were based on studying a period of expansion.[1]

After a brief outline of some of the constitutional problems faced by local government this chapter will examine theoretical ideas which have been used to explain the locus of power in policy making. It will then discuss more fully theoretical issues relevant to this thesis and will consider the development of theory in relation to Scottish education with

particular reference to the contributions of Humes and of McPherson and Raab.

2.2 Constitution and Contraction

It is worth citing the opinion of Ashford that for more than a century local government has been at the heart of major controversies over institutional reform in Great Britain.[2] Over this period Parliament has managed to put off decisions on the position of local government. The reluctance to change the constitutional status of local government has left some councils, who have clear local mandates, at odds with central government. Further, central government has overruled local decisions for ideological reasons. The crux of the issue has been the normative view of the power and position of local government. On the one hand it is argued that local councils are a manifestation of the democratic process in that they are elected directly by the people and therefore have a mandate to operate autonomously. On the other hand local government is seen as the creation of Parliament to which it is ultimately responsible. If the latter is the case then local democracy can be abandoned and councils turned into branches of the civil service or privatised. In the late eighties the government did reduce the role of local councils by privatisation and the use of non-elected agencies.

These opposing arguments have been used by both Left and Right in defence of their own positions. For instance the local democracy argument was used in the 1960's and 70's by Conservative councils who resisted comprehensivisation, while the legitimacy of Parliament argument was used by the Labour Party. In contrast in the 1980's, the Conservative government used its large parliamentary majorities to

overrule policies of local councils which were voted into office with very large majorities, Strathclyde Region being one of the best examples of this. Adapting to Change had the issue of the legitimacy and position of local government at its centre and this topic will arise repeatedly.

The period under consideration was therefore one during which demography and Westminster demanded contraction while the public expected at the very least defence of the current level of services. Strathclyde attempted to reduce quantity while enhancing quality and argued that closures were therefore necessary. It will be argued that in the case of withdrawal of services issues of power and its locus are important. When popular local services are proposed for closure, local government is at its most politically controversial and the relative abilities of groups and individuals to influence the process is apparent. Further, with a wide range of closely involved groups, agenda setting and decision (and non decision) making can be studied.

Reduction of services is an area which (particularly in a Scottish context) has not been given prominence in accounts of educational policy making in the post-war period. In the late 1970's some writers were beginning to make predictions of the effects of contraction on local government. Wright considers that the removal (temporary or permanent) of the experience of growth and the expectation of growth leads to changes in the characteristics of organisational structure and function.[3] For Hood and Wright the end of the era of expansion saw both Labour and Conservative governments changing political priorities from increasing growth to decreasing inflation. The resulting 'cuts' for Hood and Wright are not as simple as might first appear. They point out that

cuts may be targeted or shared across departments; they may be simply reduction in the rate of expansion; they may be planned or unplanned, and importantly planned cuts may lead to no actual reduction in expenditure. A crucial dimension is the decision on whether cuts are to be incremental or quantum. They question whether or not incremental expansion can simply be put into reverse gear and caution against simplistic approaches.[4] Hood and Wright argue that government in recession finds itself in a more highly politicised process and that retrenchment heightens conflict between the centre and the periphery. Capital spending is the first to be reduced but a climate of retrenchment also offers the centre a chance to pull out of developments it does not favour and abandon commitments it has been forced to give. Hood and Wright argue that decremental cuts (such as recruitment freezes) are the easiest to apply but they are also the easiest for departments to reverse. Finding specific quantum cuts can be time-consuming and this time gives the bureaucracy an opportunity to organise against any retrenchment.[5]

Stewart expands on this theme by creating a framework of analysis of a period of standstill.[6] He predicts that government is likely to change existing practices and that this may increase political and organisational conflict. For Stewart, in times of retrenchment, bidding strategies become less important than defensive strategies. Capital expenditure declines in importance in political debate and there is in increased concentration on revenue spending. Stewart feels that theorists have shared with practitioners an assumption of continued growth. Adapting to Change offers the opportunity to examine the above concepts and, as will be seen in later chapters, the reversal of incremental growth is not a simple matter. Opening schools is a relatively easy and pleasant experience;

closing them is quite the reverse. Service provision is not only 'the same but less' in times of contraction.

Wright also emphasises not only the fiscal realities but the expectations of both providers and consumers of services.[7] Expansion of services created a climate in which discussion centred around the distribution and structure of new resources. This was apparent in the expansion of secondary education from 1945 onwards, where, as Gray, McPherson and Raffe point out, government was concerned with the introduction of universal secondary education and sought to reduce the 'wastage' of able pupils. Further, the system had to cope with the bulge in pupil numbers caused by the increased post-war birth rate and increasing staying-on rates of pupils beyond the then compulsory school-leaving age.[8] The problems of the period from 1945 to 1970 were of a different kind to those of the eighties.

However, McPherson and Raab note that, taking a longer historical perspective, periods of expansion were unusual in the development of Scottish education.[9] Nonetheless it is apparent that the experience of the politicians, professionals and public involved in Adapting to Change was of the expansionist post-war period. The Directorate had all started their careers in an era of teacher shortages and booming rolls. Councillors and parents had lived, and in many cases been pupils in, the years of expansion. Further, the West of Scotland public had largely viewed the raising of the school leaving age and the introduction of comprehensive education as positive developments.

This experience coloured the attitudes and helped create the

'assumptive worlds' of those involved.[10] Here the term 'assumptive world' is used to describe the attitudes and expectations resulting from the past experiences of the individual as well as of professional and political groups. The expansion of education, like the introduction of the National Health Service, had a psychological impact which in Strathclyde equated expansion with progress. The memory of the thirties depression was strong in the West of Scotland and any contraction in the depressed eighties aroused hostility. Similarly, the managerial experience of the Council was of building schools, expanding services and employing staff. To understand Adapting to Change it important to understand something of these experiences.

2.3 Theoretical Approaches to Policy and Power

(a) Introduction

This section will examine some of the ideas used by writers in the field of educational policy. Dunleavy and O'Leary identify five main theoretical models of the state which may usefully be used in the analysis if policy making and power in government.[11] These are pluralism, New Right theory, elite theory, Marxism and neo-pluralism. It is beyond the scope of this study to cover this whole field and so a selection has been made of those approaches which are most commonly used and usefully applied to the government of a public education service. Omitted therefore are accounts which deal primarily with macro-economic forces (such as Marxism) and those which focus on public choice and market forces (such as New Right theories).

Consideration will therefore be given to some of the key concepts namely partnership, pluralism, centralism and corporatism which have

been used by writers on educational policy making. Also examined will be the conjunction of corporate management with professionalism in relation to the position of members of the education Directorate. This last issue is explored as professionals (at senior levels) in UK education have been consistently identified as influential in policy development. Professional power is central to most analyses of educational policy making in Scotland, where teachers as a group enjoyed greater autonomy than in the rest of Britain. This was evident in the existence of the General Teaching Council (GTC) and in the strength of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS).[12] However, it will be argued that the nature of Adapting to Change and the management methods of Strathclyde led to a deprofessionalisation and politicisation of the Directorate.

In discussing local government in the United Kingdom the area which dominates the literature is not the effectiveness of policy making or the efficiency of communication but the location and use of power and influence. Lukes indicates that for social realists, power is an inherently unequal relationship, comprising an attempt by one person or group to secure compliance from or enforce dependence upon another person or group.[13] Here power will be taken to characterise the ability of individuals or groups to take a particular course of action against the declared wishes of others or in the face of apathy. Concepts used are either centralised power (centralism, corporatism) or shared power (partnership, pluralism). Theories see power either as held by central government or as shared, usually with local government and professional groups. Domination by other groups than central government is not discussed except in relation to concern over officer/ professional domination or in the mid-eighties the case of 'wayward' councils such as Lambeth and

Liverpool. Even though these latter cases affected national policy their effect was to provoke reaction rather than to constitute a real challenge to the power of central government. Power in Britain in the eighties therefore either lay at the centre or was shared depending on the account accepted.

In this thesis it is important to examine the amount of power and influence exercised by the various participants in the shaping and delivery of educational provision. While education has particular characteristics which distinguish it from other local services, much writing on local authorities in general is informative when looking at education. In all theoretical approaches the main groups considered are central government and civil servants, councillors and officials, professionals and consumers, both individually and collectively. Ideas will be drawn mainly from British literature on policy making and will be considered in the light of evidence from the Scottish educational system in general and Strathclyde Region in particular. Concentration will be on policy making in the eighties with reference to trends since 1945. The web of relationships among the above groups is extremely complex. As Griffith states on the topic of central/ local government relations,

"The working relationship between central government departments and local authorities in England and Wales can be regarded in terms which are formal, informal, statutory, non-statutory, legal, extra-legal, financial, official, personal, political, functional, tragical-comical-historical -pastoral."[14]

Study of Adapting to Change offers insight into many of Griffith's concerns, which apply equally to Scotland. It further highlights the role of

church and pressure-group politics. This is important because of the position of the Roman Catholic Church in the West of Scotland and and the array of community, political and Trades Union groups influencing local Labour Party policy. Most writers take a similar line to Griffith in their caution in tackling such a complex topic.

The change over this time in central-local relations is pointed to by Ranson (among others) who states that in the case of the central to local locus of power continuum, the pendulum swung from the centre in the late 1940's towards the local in the 1960's and again to the centre in the 1980's.[15] While this one-dimensional idea of a pendulum of power is an over-simplification, it is a useful image for use in considering both central-local government relations and relations within local government. As stated in chapter 1, Strathclyde itself had been criticised for being centralised, remote from some communities and for being dominated by the politics and politicians of the urban areas. It will be seen that Strathclyde in Adapting to Change tried to transfer more power to local communities, with unhappy results. The relationship of local to central government and the use of power within local government are crucial to any understanding educational policy making. It was clear in the 1980's that central-local relations were poor and that this was not helped by the constitutional structure. Adapting to Change shows results of the use of power and points to the effects of this use on efficiency and democracy. It will be seen that the implementation of, and decision making within, Adapting to Change showed up some of the worst aspects of local-central relations.

Distribution of power and influence over policy is complex and its

study does not produce a neat categorisation of power and influence within government and public sector. However a continuum can be identified which has pluralism at one end and centralism at the other. For instance partnership and corporatism can be located between pluralism and centralism with anarchy as one extreme beyond pluralism and fascism as another extreme beyond centralism. The sections below consider the main ideas on the continuum used in the study of local government and of central-local relations.

(b) Pluralism.

'Adapting to Change' proposed the involvement of a 'plurality' of influence in decisions on school closures. In education in the 1980's 'pluralism' had a wide appeal and is therefore a concept worthy of consideration here. Dunleavy and O'Leary consider that pluralist approaches to state-society relations, state organisation, policy making and political crises dominate the political science literature of Western Europe and North America, although much less so than in the 1960's.[16] They consider pluralism to have been empirically richer and more concerned with empirical accuracy than other approaches. Although for Dunleavy and O'Leary pluralism does not dominate liberal approaches to politics as it once did they nonetheless consider its influence crucial.

In the literature on policy and power, terminology is a matter of debate and as a result there are almost as many definitions of terms as there are writers. Pluralism has to be considered in three separate ways. First it is an analytical tool as described by Smith.[17] Second it is an experience informing the actions and expectations of individuals and institutions. Third, pluralism offers a description of the way things

should be done. Here, pluralism will be used as in the first sense though its influence on individuals will be acknowledged. Thrasher warns,

"It is to be hoped that those who conduct the central-local debate by employing such terms as 'partnership' without considering the various factors involved might soon realise the extent to which this model has become a catch-all concept and one possessing the potential for still further confusion." [18]

In particular, there is a differing use of terms and of evidence needed to justify the label 'pluralist', 'corporatist' etc. according to the different types of interaction studied and the different levels at which they are studied. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider whether or not pluralism in government-multinational business relations is the same as pluralism in the relations between a community and a small local authority and so the discussion will concentrate on theoretical approaches current in education and other areas of local government. This avoids consideration of the privileged position of business in relation to government as described by Smith, and by Jordan and Richardson and others. [19]

McPherson and Raab's definition of pluralism is useful. They state that,

"... pluralism asserts that the exercise of power is not unilaterally determined by any one social or political grouping, but is characterised by conflict, bargaining and compromise among a shifting plurality of political and social groups". [20]

A pluralist political system is one in which there are several centres of power and authority, rather that one in which the state is the sole controller. Writers from Burke onward have identified this

diversification of the locus of power as central to democracy, with a system of checks and balances which limit one part of the system from becoming dominant.[21][22]

Pluralists ascribe more importance to elections, party competition, and interest groups than other theorists. They see the influence of citizens on politicians a reality and stress the multiple channels through which development of public policies can be influenced.[23] Writing specifically of education, Gerwirtz and Ozga focus on the English experience of pluralism and see it arising from the English experience of multiple providers of education, each jealously guarding its sphere, free from central control and valuing *laissez-faire*.[24] Here it is important to note that a distribution of power need not involve local authorities and that power can be dispersed between parts of central government. Pluralism, as an analytical tool, emerged in the United States in the 1960's according to Smith and reflected the dispersion of power and influence of the political system.[25] In Britain the idea of shared power has been influential in models of the management of the education system which were promoted both by social scientists such as Kogan and by government itself. Education, described as a 'national service locally administered' in the 1944 Education Act, enjoyed a period of consensus after the war.[26] In the triumvirate of central government, local government and the teachers' organisations, all had some (varying) power but none held complete power. In the post-war period the financial and legislative power of the centre, local control and opportunity for innovation in an expanding system which had all-party support combined with the power of the teachers supported claims of plurality of influence. The work of Kogan and van der Eyken on the power of chief education officers in

England and Wales and their descriptions of the great power and influence of the local authority associations supported the pluralist notion.[27] These groups, along with the exam boards, bodies such as the Schools Council (in England) and the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (in Scotland), the universities, parents and industry demonstrated the existence of a wide community of interest.

Smith considers the view that the characteristic of pluralist theory is that it leads to a benign view of power which rejects the view of a corporate state.[28] Dunleavy and O'Leary point out that most British and American pluralists have been criticised as being apologists for the *status quo* in liberal Western democracies.[29] However, the failings of governments from the 1960's onwards have forced a reappraisal of the pluralist position. In education, Kogan, the champion of pluralism both as descriptive theory and as prescriptive ideal, had by 1975 stated that,

"Contrived pluralism and continuity are bedded deeply within the system and support accepted institutional patterns."[30]

Kogan described a system in which central government wielded greater power and had greater influence than previously. This increasing power led writers such as Fowler [31] and McPherson and Raab [32] to see centralism in the UK creeping in from the late 1950's onwards. There was partnership at some levels of government concerning some issues, but in general the seventies and eighties saw increased centralisation.

As in the rest of the UK there was a decline both in pluralism and partnership from the late sixties onwards within the Scottish education system. In Adapting to Change therefore the existence of a dispersal of

power and influence would support a pluralist interpretation of the work of local government. Examples of partnership would demonstrate to an even greater extent a dispersal of influence. It would be interesting to consider whether or not this dispersal of power, or lack of it, reflected the dominant theme of the time, that of educational contraction. These matters will be considered in later chapters.

Of course pluralism and partnership are not the same thing. Partnership implies a 'cosy' relationship and the term has been used in the description of central-local relations in the past and as an ideal which should be striven for. For Gerwirtz and Ozga, partnership represents the fusion of pluralist analysis of educational policy making and pluralist interpretations of educational history. This seems to leave partnership as a fusion of the first and second categories of pluralism mentioned above.[33] There are areas of work where the term partnership would be both a good description of reality and a prescription for a future approach but this seems more appropriate in the 'constructive' areas of education such as curriculum design than in cases of service withdrawal. While in many non-controversial aspects of the work of local government there are examples of partnership, pluralism is considered here a more useful term which leaves room for instances of true partnership and also forces the distinction between partnership and situations where there is cooperation but no distribution of power.

While a useful tool, there are several problems with the pluralist position. For Smith the key problems are methodological.[34] Pluralist theory rests on observable behaviour and attracts some of the same criticisms as behaviourism in psychology which it in some ways

resembles. For example, the consultation by government of a particular group says something about that group, but ignores much that can be learned by considering status, biography of members and the history of the group. Is the group consulted because the government knows the type of response to expect? For example a Conservative government consulting the Professional Association of Teachers may point to the fact that the government knows a certain type of response will be forthcoming. This consultation does not reflect pluralism. Groups may also be consulted, not in a desire for partnership, but because public knowledge of lack of consultation could undermine a reform. For example, it is unlikely that health reforms would be introduced without government consulting the British Medical Association. Therefore involvement of outside groups is not enough; evidence has to be sought on why certain groups are consulted. Whether or not outcomes are influenced by consultation is often hard to deduce and pluralists fail to account for those who are unable to gain access to the policy making process.

Writers from Lukes to Jordan and Richardson point to the importance of non-decision making and the power to include and exclude items on the political agenda . [35] [36] Lukes is critical of many facets of pluralism and states,

"Individuals and elites may act separately in making acceptable decisions, but they may act in concert - or even fail to act at all - in such a way as to keep unacceptable issues out of politics, thereby preventing the system from becoming more diverse than it is."

Any analysis must therefore be able to take account of both observable behaviour, questions of access and intent, agenda setting and decision

making. It must also for Lukes, be able to account for situations where individuals are unsure of or unconscious of the outcome which would be of benefit to them. Jordan and Richardson state that pluralists leave the concept of 'state' reduced to no more than a synonym for government while other writers find it a useful and distinct concept. Dunleavy and O'Leary see pluralism as having a naive theory of the state but consider it to be more a theory of society than of the state.[37] Pluralism is used as a descriptive tool but it is argued that other sources of evidence rather than observable consultation must be taken into account in order to gain a full understanding of Adapting to Change. It will for instance be argued below that within Strathclyde the concentration of both legislative and executive power in senior councillors led to the creation of a local state which showed little evidence of plurality of influence.

(c) Centralism.

Local authorities in the 1980's often protested against centralisation of power. This section explores centralist evaluations of power and influence on policy. As with pluralism different types of centralism are examined by different writers using differently defined terms. Centralism can be used to refer to the history and 'psychology' of a system, as an analytical tool, or as an evaluative term which carries (mostly negative) connotations. Different variations on the centralist theme will be considered namely centralism, corporatism, and corporate management and bureaucratic power or 'bureaucratism'.

Moves taking more power to central government during the eighties led to greater evidence for identifying different types of centralism. The idea of the centralisation of power, according to McPherson and Raab,

implies that power resides decisively in central government, and that local government and its employees, including teachers, are not much more than the agents of central government, having little or no autonomy.[38] This does not accord with the discussion in section (b) above but for this thesis it will be assumed that the most evident centralising tendency is that which shifts power to central government. There is an assumption that centralism is a 'bad thing'. This distaste is apparent when disputes occur between central government controlled by one political party and local government controlled by another. Thrasher for instance suggests centralism has been associated with drab uniformity and minimum standards but points out that historically centralised government has not necessarily meant over-government.[39] Further, Kogan, while still arguing for a wide spread of power and influence, points to the need in some policy areas for nationally created objectives.[40] For instance, it will be argued in later chapters, that some of the issues which arose during Adapting to Change could have been tackled more successfully if there had been strong national direction on the issue of falling school rolls. The problem is what level of central direction is too centralist and at what point and to what extent local authorities should adjust to local circumstances, or for that matter at what point should the officers of the local authority claim that a matter comes into their professional domain. The particular case of education has been an interesting one in the central-local government debate. Ranson states,

"Education has perhaps been the most complex and burdened of services. As the keystone of public policy-making and social reform in the postwar period, education has been expected to fuel economic growth, facilitate equality of opportunity and afford some social justice to the deprived..." [41]

Paradoxically during the period in the sixties when belief in ideas of social engineering through education was at its height, the government is seen as having been at its most decentralised and that in the eighties, when Ranson's social engineering approach was less popular, the government of the system was seen to be more centralised.

There is a tendency to criticise the increased centralisation of power either in London or in Edinburgh (for those writers who consider Scotland at all) but there is also evidence for identifying a form of centralism in a very large local authority such as Strathclyde. Criticism of centralised power can be voiced while ignoring the shortcomings arising from small local authorities. Issues of patronage, unevenness of service, officer domination and lack of innovation were all raised in relation to smaller local authorities before regionalisation. In fact a strong case can be made for large, strong councils such as Strathclyde or the GLC on the grounds that they provide checks and balances on central government power. The Left would argue that this is precisely why such councils were attacked by the Conservative Party.

That power has moved to the centre from the sixties onwards is supported by many writers including Crispin who states, "Be it in local government finance or education, most commentators appear to agree that centralisation has increased significantly." [42] There is some dispute as to when this trend started but Griffith and Thrasher date it back to 1945 [43] [44] though as stated above there was a swing to more local control in the sixties. Kogan writes of this period,

"... the prevailing principles of governance could be those of evolution, interaction, decentralisation and letting things grow at the

base rather than preconstruction and installation."[45]

This described education planning at a time of rapid expansion. The reasons for the centralisation of power since the late seventies are given by Broadfoot as the breakdown of the educational consensus of the earlier post war period, declining confidence in schools and the economic crisis. She sees the centre as using new and existing legislation in the pursuit of control.[46] In a large and complex system, effective means of control are vital for a government which wants to keep a hold on the reins of power. Dunsire shows how many of the changes gave the DES tighter control over the education system in England and Wales in the eighties. He states that politicians' desire to keep down public expenditure combined with the civil servants' more complex methods of control could have increased the pressure on local authorities.[47] This coupled with the use of block grants, the reduction in the proportion of local authority expenditure coming from central government and other political moves put local government more directly in the electoral firing line.

The increasing drift of power to the centre is not a simple matter. Broadfoot and Dunsire both claim that the centre is not as united a force as the public face suggests [48] [49] and agree that heed must be paid to the experiences of those Ministers (e.g. Williams, Benn) who,in the recent past when they were at the centre, found they had little power in many areas. Fowler accords with McPherson and Raab in stating that all parties in education have lost power due to such changes as the introduction of corporate management and the transfer of educational functions to appointed bodies such as the (now defunct) Manpower Services Commission. This movement of power out of education contributed to

the lessening of influence of local authorities.[50]

If centralism is about control it was also in the eighties associated with conflict. The development of central-local relations since 1945 saw the breakdown of consensus a decrease in partnership and an increase in conflict. Kogan's work on policy initiatives, with increasing opposition over time, points to this [51] as did the disputes in the mid-eighties involving central government and such authorities as Lambeth, Liverpool and Lothian, and the abolition of the GLC and the English Metropolitan Counties.[52] The Right would argue that these changes were intended to devolve power downwards from large urban councils, however they did make any form of partnership or pluralism involving central government and weaker local authorities less evident. The increased use of legislation and of the courts was notable and lent weight to the idea that the centre sought to control by force rather than by persuasion. Young suggests that the increase of central power is like a ratchet in that power taken to the centre is unlikely to return to the local authorities.[53] It is difficult to see how in an absolute sense this is true in that legislation is reversible. However the increased use of financial and legal mechanisms could breed a fondness for more effective and direct control than in the past.

It may be the case that expansion leads to less control and contraction to more. Contraction however can be of two forms. Demography can force contraction of provision in absolute terms but this does not necessarily lead to greater central control. In the second sense where contraction is financially based and leads to a *per capita* reduction in expenditure it is likely to result in greater control. Strathclyde councillors

would argue that they were victims of both types of contraction and therefore subject to centralising tendencies. Similarly there can be two kinds of expansion; one forced by increasing numbers and one by increased *per capita* expenditure. Expansion or contraction in the *quality* of provision clearly depends on government policy. In a period of centralisation the policy which matters is more and more that of central government.

Moves to take power to the centre were not portrayed by central government as a simple reduction in the power of local authorities. If the drift to centralism is a major strand essential to the understanding of the local authority management of education in the eighties then another major aspect of this debate is the stated aim of the Thatcher government to 'roll back the state' and to increase the power of the individual. Thus the many measures such as the sale of council houses, contracting out of services and increased parent power were often viewed as cutting out the middleman in the shape of the local authority. Ranson quotes an education officer as saying that,

"..what the state is in the process of creating is a new contract between state and citizen that will erode the middle level planning function."[54]

While this study does not compare across time it is hoped that it will give a useful snapshot of the position of the education 'consumer'. Much has been made of this apparent contradiction between centralisation of power and emphasis on the individual. It could be argued that the Thatcher governments were genuinely concerned to shift power to the individual and move towards a model of local government which supervised contracts and had little power over opted-out services. However it must be noted that such shifts of power adversely affect some

consumers who are unable to make certain choices such as opting in to private education or sending their child to a non-local school.[55] Alternatively it could be argued that the government saw the Labour-controlled authorities as barriers to progress and therefore whose power needed to be weakened. These two arguments support both centralisation and devolution of power away from local authorities.

This study offers the chance to study the power of the centre, the use of financial control and political intervention by the centre in the affairs of local government. It will be argued both that Adapting to Change accelerated centralisation and at the same time reflected a remarkable rejection of the social values promoted by central government.

(d) Corporatism.

Centralism, from a 1980's viewpoint, carried with it connotations of 'post-settlement' conflict between central and local government. In his important analysis of power Lukes highlighted the fact that it was crucial that theory should be able to cope with the issue of power in the absence of conflict.[56] Some agenda setting and exercise of informal influence can be included in pluralist and centralist analyses but corporatism as a theoretical standpoint is useful in describing the less visible use of power and influence. Dunleavy and O'Leary describe corporatism as a subset of elite theory which identifies government by small ruling groups.[57]

Modern elite theory differs from normative elitism because it puts forward an empirical picture not particularly linked to a view of the way social arrangements should be organised. For Dunleavy and O'Leary elites, including representative elites, are imposed on society, not

proposed by society.[58] They state that elite theorists are preoccupied with the state's capacity to adapt to its environment, its steering capacity and its control of its subjects. They describe three analytic conceptions of the state which can be applied to liberal democracies. The first of these sees the state as a machine controlled by an external elite, from for example politics and/or business. The second sees the state as controlled not from outside but as responding to the preferences of the administration. The third image pictures the state as a corporatist network which is integrated with external elites into a single control system.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to consider the impact of national or business elites on government but the second and third models above are useful in examining policy making at sub-national level. Corporatist analysis fits with more cynical views of power within society and embodies Marxist ideas of powerful vested interests. This approach opened up an area in which democratic elitism queried standard pluralist reasoning about an open and competitive interest group universe.[59] Corporatists see the state as an entity distinct from government, and the 'establishment'. Schmitter's classic definition states that,

"Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports."[60]

Corporatism therefore implies privileged access to the state for a limited number of bodies which in turn ensure discipline within their constituency. Corporatism, according to Smith, is at its most prominent

in the world of big business and is a mechanism for allowing the state to overcome the conflicts within society in order to achieve success 'in the national interest'.[61] The concept is however useful in relation to the present study. While increased centralism or pluralism are easily identified it is more difficult to analyse changes in corporatism in running local government. Corporatism describes the 'incorporation' of representatives of powerful bodies into the decision making process. It can be seen having some elements of partnership and centralism in that the partners become part of the central community of influence rather than of the constituencies they represent. Examples of this, as described by Kavanagh, were the formal incorporation of representatives of the CBI and the TUC on bodies such as the National Economic Development Council or the Manpower Services Commission.[62]

Variants of corporatism can be identified in the formation of elites of influential people in powerful positions who have similar outlooks and backgrounds. There is an element of 'seduction' in corporatism, as described by Kavanagh, in relation to the incorporation of less powerful individuals such as workers and consumers. Representatives gain status and find increased opportunities for communication but lose contact with their constituency and are less likely than unincorporated groups or individuals to adopt a radical approach. This 'seduction' corporatism can be distinguished from the 'old boy' corporatism of Humes in which individuals within education gain power and develop into a power elite within the system.[63]

The analysis of this in relation to this thesis will be returned to in chapter 6. Evidence of incorporation will be examined and it will be of

interest to consider which groups have privileged access to decision making and whether this access is consistent with democratic principles.

(e) Corporate Management and Bureaucratic Power

Most studies in central/local relations have concerned themselves with debates using such terms as partnership, pluralism, centralism and corporatism. However different concepts are useful when dealing with bureaucracy. Much influenced by Weber, writers have highlighted the position of bureaucracies in government. At the broadest level a bureaucracy (which includes ministers, generalist administrators and professionals) can be seen as the only vehicle which can sensibly run modern government because of its technical superiority over other systems. Dunleavy and O'Leary comment that,

"In practical politics corporatism has been an ideology of social integration, espoused especially by non-elected political elites trying to manage increasingly complex societies without introducing liberal representative government."[64]

However, for Dunleavy and O'Leary bureaucrats make bad leaders because they are indoctrinated to accept authority.[65] Therefore any period of their ascendancy produces conservative, unimaginative and unbalanced leadership. They are of the opinion that if charismatic political leaders can be incalculated and socialised into democratic values then public bureaucracies can be subordinated to the elites generated by party competition, thus creating the only feasible approximation to a genuine representative democracy.[66] One problem which arises in the position of modern bureaucracies which is important in this study is that the classic distinction between political and the administrative functions becomes more difficult as matters become more complex and technical.

As professionals become more technically expert it is more difficult to hold them to account and so there is scope for a politicisation of their role in that they alone have full knowledge and understanding of the complexities of the system. They are therefore in a position to make 'political' decisions. This possibility is greater in small units of government such as local authorities which are directed by part-time, non-expert politicians.

The position of officials is crucial to the understanding of power in the public service and this has been given much academic attention.[67] One note of caution must be sounded in describing bureaucratic power in education. As Kogan notes, it is wrong to describe bureaucracies like the DES as more or less a composite, with a single set of preferences.[68] Within British education bureaucracies there are ministers who have a strong personal stake in promoting their policies, permanent officials who are interested both in administrative efficiency and fiscal parsimony and professional groups whose desire to maximise budgets and staff is grounded both in personal utility and the needs and professional culture of the services with which they are associated.

Officials are clearly an essential part of national and local government. There is sufficient evidence across Britain and in Scotland in particular that they have an agenda distinct from that of the politicians. The extent to which senior officials are part of a plurality of influence is debatable but there is no doubt that they have a privileged access to the policy making process and that the concentration of power in their hands is a force for centralisation. Writers in the 1960's and 1970's (reflecting the classic division above) were concerned with the position of

'political' versus 'professional' in local government. In Adapting to Change the role of officials is informative. It will be argued that their position was radically different from that described by writers on the English system. Around the time of comprehensivisation writers such as James, Jennings and Kogan, [69] [70] [71] were taking an interest in the political process within the government of education and the positions of chief education officers, councillors and central government. They identified the substantial influence of officials, particularly chief education officers. Within local government there had been an erosion of the power of chief education officers since 1945 due to increased politicisation at a local level and the reduction of educational consensus. Also, larger post-reorganisation local authorities tended to have more expert councillors and there were fewer chief education officers. This politicisation of local government and the end to expansion in education led to further reductions in power of officials.

The above were added to by the emphasis placed on corporate management by large local authorities. Here corporate management is distinguished from corporatism in that corporate management emphasised the desirability of a corporate or integrated approach as opposed to a departmental approach.[72] In a study of four English local authorities Jennings saw centralisation of decision making rather than corporate planning. He also identified politicisation leading to the exclusion of education officers from the decision making process with national party policy rather than professional considerations being paramount.[73] According to Jennings the increase in corporate planning has led to an increase in the role of the chief executive of local authorities at the expense of heads of particular services such as education.[74] This

'local centralism' was assisted by the increased use of block grants and cash limits by central government as opposed to the direct funding of particular services.

With the erosion of departments there was a pressure for local education officers to see themselves as officers of the Council rather than professional educators. This process was also at work within the Scottish Office where administrators rather than HMI's, who would have been former teachers, filled senior education posts and wielded greater influence than was the case in the fifties and sixties.[75]

In the present study, the interplay of three crucial aspects of the work of officials will be considered. Within local government in the eighties the education directorates were staffed by professional educators and officials were therefore expected by school staff to work within the framework of the mores and standards of the education world. Secondly, officials were part of the bureaucracy running large and complex organisations and so had to have regard to the overall efficiency and culture of the bureaucracy. Thirdly these officials were in close contact with politicians and were open to pressure to find politically acceptable solutions to problems thrown up within the service. It will be shown in this study that the political aspect of the work was dominant, raising questions on the role of the professional in highly charged issues.

(f) Central-Local Relations in Scotland.

How Scotland measures on the scales of partnership, pluralism, centralism and corporatism is of importance in this thesis. Here some broad characteristics of the system should be noted.

An important additional layer of government is the Scottish Education Department (from 1990 the Scottish Office Education Department), which though independent in many ways from the Department of Education and Science (from 1992 the Department for Education) was not independent of UK government policies, cash restraints etc. The SED played a pivotal role between Whitehall and local government in the post-war period. The department depended on the performance of local government for its own success and the local authorities looked greatly to the centre. The SED's relations with Whitehall are little understood but in terms of legislation there was a tendency for some to be tried earlier in Scotland than in England (as with the Community Charge/Poll Tax) leading to a feeling that Scotland was a testing ground for the trial of unpopular policies.

It is generally accepted that the Scottish education system was more centralised than that of England and Wales. The main reason is the smallness of the country. Scottish education has always looked to the centre, a centre which according to Humes is one controlled by a power elite of like minded individuals whose centralism and elitism for Humes undermined the system. [76] McPherson identified a bias towards the East Coast, the fee paying and the non-Catholic schools in appointments to major education committees. Fears of elitism and bias were heightened by the increasing placing of nominees of the Secretary of State rather than representatives of professional organisations on powerful bodies. This and other developments throughout the eighties tended to increase the power of the centre. The influence of the Scottish Examination Board and the Scottish Education Department continued with the implementation

of Standard Grade and the publication of documents detailing curriculum and assessment between the ages of 5 and 14. This displayed an increasing tendency for the centre to be involved in the minutiae of the curriculum. For political and financial reasons less emphasis was placed on local development of courses by teachers leading to a greater degree of centralism in the development of the nuts and bolts of education.

The extension of the process of central government control over syllabi and exams was advanced by the introduction of testing in English and maths in the primary school and the increasing use of SCOTVEC modules in secondary schools. All of these developments reduced the role of the local authorities. The consultative paper on curriculum and assessment in the 90's[77] was interesting as a reflection of government thinking. The paper was remarkable in that it mentioned the existence of local government only rarely. The *Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)* commented at the time of publication,

"The consultative paper virtually ignores local government. The work of advisers is hardly mentioned, the existence of regional curriculums is disregarded. Head-teachers are to submit their statements of curricular and assessment policy to HMI's, not to directors of education" .[78]

The SED during this period tried to keep close control over many educational issues. However, before Adapting to Change, the centre did not intervene on the issue of school closures. In the great difficulties experienced by Lothian Regional Council in attempts to rationalise part of its secondary provision in the mid-eighties, the S.E.D. was conspicuous by its absence.[79] This absence is likely to have been due in part to a desire to keep out of the business of closing schools. As will be seen in chapters 4

and 5 participation in closures was almost always an unpleasant experience for the agencies involved.

During the eighties another parallel move was the emphasis in Scotland, as throughout the UK, on the role of parents as the consumer group in education. As mentioned above the Conservative Party has increasingly determined to reduce the role of the state and to set up a new relationship between the consumer and service providers. Government, particularly local government, was seen as a wasteful and interfering intermediary which protected service providers from the needs and demands of consumers. Privatisation, contracting out of services and the introduction of the Citizen's Charter were examples of central government initiatives aimed at reducing the role of local authorities. In education, the extension of parental choice in schooling brought about by the Education (Scotland) Act 1981,[80] the extension of the Assisted Places Scheme by the same piece of legislation and proposals such as those on the introduction of school boards were also central.[81] A strong case can be made that these and other developments are at least in part designed to undermine (mostly politically hostile) local authorities and to promote consumerism at a local level. Whether it is because the potential weakness of local school management, or the attractiveness of the power of the consumer over the teachers is debatable but in the end the local authority was squeezed.[82]

The concepts used above were all used to describe power and influence over policy making in Britain as a whole. The following section will consider the specifically Scottish context, examining the aims of this research and work on educational policy making in Scotland.

2.4 Theoretical Implications for Educational Policy Making in Scotland

(a) Theoretical Issues

As stated in the introduction this thesis has three main aims. The first of these is to describe, from a number of viewpoints, the workings of an important part of the education system at a time of great stress. The second is to consider some of the major analytical tools used in the literature of power and policy making in the light of the experience of a small educational system which is sufficiently different from the rest of Britain to provide an interesting test of the usefulness of theory. The third main aim is to add to the knowledge of Scottish educational policy making, developing from the contributions of Humes and of McPherson and Raab. These will be considered in more detail in this section.

In subsequent chapters evidence thrown up by Adapting to Change will be used to consider whether or not there was evidence of a plurality influence on educational policy making or whether in fact the contention that power was more and more being drawn to the centre holds. Evidence of incorporation and elites will also be looked for and consideration will also be given as to what extent the standard concepts are of use in analysing the issue in hand in the Scottish situation. This is of importance because it offers a test of the usefulness of these concepts in a country which, it will be argued, has maintained an attachment to cooperative values not in evidence in studies of local government set in the rest of Britain.

It may be, as Saunders has suggested, that a dual state is in evidence

where government is large and has divisions within it and so therefore cannot be considered as monolithic.[83] Further, there may be different approaches by government in different arenas, particularly at the existence of a corporate approach in the economic area and a pluralist approach in the social arena.[84] In this study examination will be made of different approaches at different levels. Consideration will also be given to the position of the bureaucracy in power and policy making. Humes comments that,

"Where political will is lacking, power tends to devolve to officials who are inclined to deal with policy questions on a reactive basis, rather than out of principle: that is they respond to pressures from within the educational world, pressures which serve to create a policy agenda." [85]

Analysis of the Directorate's contribution adds to the debate on the dominance or otherwise of officials in local authorities and to what extent officers are swayed by loyalty to political, professional and bureaucratic spheres of their work by the influence of corporate management.

In addition to ideas thrown up by the literature, the issue of legitimacy and the impact of this legitimacy on government effectiveness will be considered. The legitimacy of government is a difficult and debatable notion but in a Scotland of the late eighties the contrast between a central government which enjoyed minority public support in terms of electoral success and numbers of Members of Parliament, and the massive electoral superiority of the Labour Party on Strathclyde Regional Council is immediately striking.

Lack of popular legitimacy affects a particular level of government's

ability to implement unpopular programmes when there is a financial or political imperative. In the case of Adapting to Change, the demographic dip, particularly in the secondary sector, was a fact which could be foreseen more than a decade in advance and which the naive observer would believe to be precisely the kind of issue which a centralised system with large, professional local authorities would be able to cope with. The fact that the issue was not dealt with in a satisfactory way will become apparent in later chapters. It is interesting to consider whether or not a lack of popular legitimacy assisted the Scottish Office in its reforms of Scottish education and in its dealings with interest groups and further whether if, by contrast, the relative legitimacy and accessibility of Strathclyde Regional Council made the carrying out of unpopular measures possible. Lack of electoral representation caused problems for the Tories in Scotland such as the Government's inability to form the Select Committee on Scottish Affairs in the House of Commons but shortage of electoral support paradoxically brought certain benefits. There was little chance in the West of Scotland that many of those involved in the conflict would be able to exert influence in an informal manner through local Conservative Members of Parliament as this was a rare species in Scotland in general and in Strathclyde in particular. In addition because of the social structure of the West of Scotland, other routes of power and influence were of little use e.g. the Trades Unions, the Churches, and the non-Tory political parties. All pressure groups seemed to to be on one side with the Government on the other, in a situation where the UK Conservative majority ensured that all measures, no matter how unpopular, were passed in Parliament. At the time criticism of a 'colonial' style of rule was used and there were clearly parallels in the position of the Scottish Office in the 1980's with an electorally

unsupported colonial administration.

In the approach to this investigation certain positions must be taken. The present study will not exclude consideration of any evidence, whether observable or otherwise. Action, intention, biography, influence and non decision making are all important in any description of the making of educational policy in Scotland in the 1980's as are explanations drawn from the history of the system and the 'myths' gathered around it. Scotland in general, and those involved in Scottish education in the mid-eighties, did not lack history and loyalty to separate elements of the system. It would be missing a good deal to ignore the 'assumptive worlds' of protest groups, the Educational Institute of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church, the Directorate, the Labour Party and the Scottish Office.

(b) Work on Educational Policy in Scotland.

Scottish education policy is not an area which has attracted a great deal of interest in the past. Most work on British educational policy is in fact on English educational policy and takes no account of Scottish education. Further, teachers who were amongst those most interested in a critical approach to policy, were involved in delivering the service and did not have the opportunity to spend major amounts of time on research. Additionally research was increasingly 'contracted out' by government, leading to narrow investigations which could safely examine parts of the system and avoid subject areas which led to criticism of wider government policy.[86]

The work which has been done on educational policy in Scotland falls into two main categories. The first is studies of the Scottish education

system of the 'Rise and Progress' style.[87] Works of this sort have a long pedigree and have usually been written by education 'insiders' who were committed to the system and who tended to take a positive view of Scottish education as a whole. This type of work was more prevalent in the period up to the 1970's when the education system was broadly supported and when the general opinion was that what Scotland needed was more of what was already in existence. This is of course understandable from the point of view of the educationalist of the 1930's who saw the extension of secondary education to all children as the major goal, or to the equivalent writer in the 1960's whose main interest was the expansion of comprehensive education or the raising of the school leaving age to sixteen. The late twentieth century education world had no such totems and the psychology of expansion (combined with the reduction in students in teacher training who would have been the most likely purchasers of books on education) led to the decline of the 'rise and progress' school of writing on Scottish education.

The second type of study of Scottish education and policy making arose from the expansion of sociological analysis of education combined with an increasingly critical and pessimistic analysis of education in general. While on a UK scale education has been subject to such study there have, for the reasons outlined above, been been few attempts to tackle the thorny issues of Scottish education policy.

Below, the ideas of two major contributions to the study of Scottish education policy will be considered; namely those of Humes and of McPherson and Raab.[88] These writers offer two different reference points in a neglected field and the validity of their conclusions can be tested in

the light of Adapting to Change. The works are important in this thesis for two main reasons. First, they look in detail at developments of educational policy, using some of the theoretical concepts mentioned above, applying them to a particularly Scottish context. Second, for the student of Scottish education policy they provide a base-line for further investigation of Scottish education policy.

Humes analyses a wide range of educational institutions over a narrow time span and McPherson and Raab look at a narrower range of institutions in greater depth and over a longer time span. They use some of the concepts mentioned above and apply them to a specifically Scottish context. This thesis will show that some of the conclusions would benefit from reexamination in the light of Adapting to Change. In particular it will be argued that the power of the educational professionals is less apparent in an overtly political, contracting phase.

Humes presents a picture of Scottish education in his work *The Leadership Class in Scottish Education* which takes a general view of policy but concentrates in particular on the professionals in influential positions within the system. While others have been critical of policy makers and have attacked the Government's role in policy making, Humes' analysis does not find all fault in Scottish education located in politicians of one party or another; rather for him the major problems lies within a power elite which runs the system.

For Humes education is one of the main arenas of Scottish life[89] and its importance is emphasised when he states that,

"...Scottish education may be regarded both as a symptom and a cause; a symptom of the uncritical and unhealthy acceptance of academic and other forms of authority, and a cause of the social and cultural evasion which characterises much of Scottish life." [90]

Humes sees the analysis of writers of the 'rise and progress' school as being wrong when they interpret the devolution of such powers as those given by government in the 1960's to the Scottish Examination Board, the General Teaching Council, the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum as having been no more than ways of getting rid of 'crushing' administrative burdens such as that of administering the examination system. Humes draws a distinction between formal and informal power and acknowledges that many of the institutions created in the sixties have much formal power and influence but institutions such as the GTC may be unwilling or unable to exercise this power. This is an interesting inversion of corporatism where power is available but is not used. On the other hand an institution may lack formal power but may have a great deal of informal power. Informal power may be seen as good or ill as either the exercise of legitimate interest or as a distortion of democracy. Humes writes,

"Informal power may be viewed as a form of manipulation because those who exercise it are often successful in persuading others that decisions have been arrived at through a process of democratic consultation when, in fact, the real decision-making may have taken place behind the scenes."[91]

Humes sees members of the Inspectorate as an example of a group of people in Scottish education who have substantial power over and above that which comes from their formal position. It has been suggested in chapter 1 that many processes of decision making in Scottish education were unclear and this points to the use of informal power by those

involved in the system. He points to the distinction between power in an expanding as opposed to a static or contracting system and to the alteration of power over time. For example, reflecting on the position of those institutions to which power was devolved in the sixties he states that,

"the fact that social institutions develop over time and what may have seemed, and been intended as, liberating at one period, may come to be perceived as, and may actually turn out to be, restricting at a later period."[92]

When institutions such as the GTC were newly established it was easy to see them as innovative while with the benefit of hindsight there is little evidence of positive change arising from them. Humes attacks those behind the system, the 'Leadership Class', and is scathing in his attack on the 'reforms' which were presented as devolutions of power. He states,

"What is lacking is any real understanding of the forces at work in the institutional and bureaucratic agencies which have generated these 'reforms'. 'Deficit' theories of educational failure, whereby blame is attached to pupils, their parents or the community at large are rarely extended to those who actually run the system, that invisible hierarchy who lie behind the front-line ranks of classroom teachers."[93]

In general Humes develops the idea that Scottish education is dominated by this 'Leadership Class'. He uses this term as a general label for those who occupy senior positions in the world of education. For Humes the group can be identified quite precisely as career civil servants of Assistant Secretary level and above within what was the Scottish Education Department; members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate; Directors of Education and their staffs; Principals of Colleges of Education and the leading office-bearers on national committees such as the GTC, CCC, and

SEB. Only a small minority of headteachers are included and this is through their membership of national committees rather than through their position within school or college. For Humes,

"These are the people who, collectively, set a large part of the agenda of Scottish education and contribute significantly to the formulation and implementation of policy."

Humes does not exclude from his analysis the influence of others in education but he does assert that there is a central power elite.[94] Further for Humes this power elite has received very little in the way of critical scrutiny.[95] Humes is not neutral in his view of the 'Leadership Class'; he sees its members as being guilty of self protection and mutual support. To compound these sins, the elite cloak the system in a shroud of myths from the past. The theme of myths in Scottish education is one which has been highlighted in particular by McPherson[96] who explores the inter-linking of the belief that Scottish education has strengths which include openness, democracy and breadth with decisions which policy makers take based on a collective understanding. While McPherson acknowledges that the 'myths' are a combination of the real and the fanciful, Humes sees little of the supposedly traditional virtues of Scottish education reflected in the actions of the leadership class. He comments,

"The picture of the leadership class in Scottish education ... has not been marked by unbridled adulation. Those qualities with which members of that class have been associated- bureaucratic expansionism, professional protectionism and ideological deception - hardly amount to a vote of confidence in their collective achievements. Moreover, when the recent history of their actions is assessed, it emerges that those aspects of the received wisdom which stress the democratic and egalitarian character of Scottish education and which appeal to notions of

partnership and consensus, rest very uneasily with the extremely hierarchical way in which the system is organised, the endless marks of status by individuals and organisations, and the concentrating of power in the hands of a relatively small group of mutually admiring people. Taken together, these features lead relentlessly to the conclusion that much of Scottish education is now run, not for the benefit of pupils, their parents and the community at large, but to serve the interests of those who occupy senior positions in the hierarchy."[97]

He proposes that no positive reconstruction of the system can take place until the position of the leadership class is challenged. He supports the opinion that,

"Individual worth is crushed out of effective existence by the weight of the archaic and highly authoritarian socioeconomic fabric. Real individual enthusiasm, energy and competence have nowhere much to go. They would rock the boat. Second, the educational system is geared to produce pass men to fill the archaic pyramid. The system is not concerned whether these pass men have individual qualities."[98]

Humes looks to a de-mystification of centralised power and links the issue with the collective indecision of Scottish society about its future and sees the structure and function of Scottish education as both a partial cause and an effect of this malaise. As he observes,

"Education, paradoxically, is both an instrument of containment and a possible source of liberation."[99]

Humes work is a valuable part of the critical re-examination of Scottish education which developed throughout the eighties. The work has been criticised for not attempting to get closer to the powerful in the system[100] and for its hostility to the 'Leadership Class'. It can be seen as part of a broad reappraisal of some of the icons of Scottish life which took place in the wake of the 1979 Devolution referendum. However, it will be argued in later chapters that Humes' analysis is an oversimplification and

over estimates the power of that class. Adapting to Change provides evidence of the very limited power of the Leadership Class in a contracting system and shows little evidence of the gentlemanly networking which underpins the elitist model offered by Humes. On the other hand some support is offered to the idea of the ability of groups such as teachers to protect their interests. However, Adapting to Change shows the policy process to be much more political than would be implied by Humes. Nonetheless, Humes work provides an critical insight into policy making in Scottish education and it is hoped that this thesis will in some way contribute to the de-mystification of the decision making process. It provides the opportunity to examine members of Humes' 'Leadership Class' in operation and will be informative in the evaluation of the and of the use of formal and informal power.

In contrast to Humes's passionate, if somewhat unidimensional picture, McPherson and Raab take a much wider view and are less clear cut in their conclusions.[101] By taking into account the observations and opinions of many politicians, educationalists and bureaucrats who have helped shape the system during the period from 1945 to the mid 1980's they give a unique critical analysis of the making of educational policy. Their coverage is wide, but of particular importance to this thesis are the changes in influence and power over Scottish education by forces outside the Scottish educational world and changes in power and influence within education with particular reference to the 'policy community' (a term they prefer to 'Leadership Class'). Also notable are their observations on the interplay between personal experience and professional action within this policy community; the influence of the 'assumptive world' of the policy makers. The depth of their coverage leads McPherson and Raab

on a circular path from wanting to know more about educational policy, to studying it, to in the end admitting to a great deal of ignorance of how the system works. They comment that to seek explanations from those who have taken part in the shaping of the system is part of a cure for ignorance but that it also risks a another sort of ignorance as a result of the filtering and refracting of the evidence by those who have been deeply committed to Scottish education. This comment is particularly appropriate when, as in this thesis, oral evidence is considered. However, it must also be noted that filtering and refraction can affect written evidence as well as oral evidence, particularly if commentators, reporters and writers are all to some extent part of the same educational community.

McPherson and Raab do not outline a grand theory which attempts to unite the strands of educational policy making. Their work reinforces the importance of the period which is considered. It is easy to look at educational policy in the light of the present and preceding twenty or thirty years and to forget that, as they assert,

".. the years of greatest educational expansion, say from 1958 to the mid-1970's appear as a brief and untypical episode."[102]

This is an important caveat to the present work. Of the areas of importance mentioned above the first is the shift in power which McPherson and Raab observe from education to wider government. Power drifted from the professional educators to politicians and has been increasingly lost to departments such as the Treasury and to influential bodies such as the now defunct Manpower Services Commission which increasingly encroached into areas which would have been seen to be the

sole preserve of the education system in earlier times. The financial constraints of the Thatcher years only served to increase this drift. As well as the loss of power to bodies outside education McPherson and Raab highlight the increasing influence of UK wide educational policy, much of which came from a political rather than an educational agenda. The comment that,

> "The SED's thinking in the late 1950's and early 1960's.... gave no hint of the fact that, fifteen years later, it would stand committed to a system of comprehensive, non vocational secondary education, with certification for virtually all sixteen-year-olds by means of a single national certificate."[103]

is telling in that it highlights the drift in commitment of the Department in line with the UK political trends and suggests a much more compliant elite than that described by Humes.[104] In general many of the major changes in policy and provision since 1945 have originated outwith the Scottish centre often in the face of hostility or indifference of the SED. In fact McPherson and Raab distinguish between UK and Scottish policy issues. The position both of the power within education and the positions adopted by the powerful will be examined in this study.

The constraints of UK wide policy aside, there was still much power and influence within Scottish education. The retention of a distinctive curriculum and examination system, teacher training and employment system, and the GTC, all point to the ability of policy makers in Scottish education to retain many distinctive features and enhance many elements of the system. However McPherson and Raab observe that the Scottish Education Department in particular has, since the early 1950's, moved from being a predominantly regulatory body to being a

predominantly promotional one. This change, in part due to the expansion of the education system led to an increased dependence on outside expertise and to an increased interaction with bodies such as the SEB, larger and more powerful local authorities (from the mid seventies onwards) and less compliant teachers organisations. Of the period to the 1970's McPherson and Raab comment, "...pluralism was a feature of the policy process, and partnership a fair description."[105] They however qualify this by acknowledging the fact that many of the most radical changes came from outside Scotland, and secondly that central government played an important role in many of the changes. This partnership was confined to issues of development rather than major initiatives such as comprehensivisation.

In another sense, and of importance to this thesis, McPherson and Raab point to the restriction of room for manoeuvre which resulted from the increasing universalisation of the education system. In the period between 1945 and 1970, power and finance in the system was diverted away from the the West of Scotland, the Catholic sector and working class areas in that finance and staffing tended to be allocated to selective Senior Secondaries which were disproportionately located outside the above sectors and areas. However, with the introduction of comprehensive education, the raising of the school leaving age and increased participation in the post-compulsory years there was much less scope for the SED to target provision. Whereas in the 1950's spending could be concentrated in certain schools without protest, this became increasingly unlikely due to the expectation of even provision across the country.

The last area of McPherson and Raab's work to be examined is their

observation of the 'policy community' both in existence and psychology. They offer a much less scathing analysis than Humes' 'Leadership Class'. The anti-democratic possibilities of the Scottish educational policy community are examined and the conclusion reached that Scottish educational policy making testifies to characteristics of both pluralism and corporatism. For McPherson and Raab there is a plurality of input, particularly with the increase in power of the Regions and the increasing militancy of teachers' organisations. It is suggested that a policy community exists and is influential, but that its influence tends to be on issues outside the core of policy. It is however impossible for all involved not to be influenced by the experience of the recent past, particularly when that experience is often as a pupil within the system as well as as a teacher, administrator or researcher. One of the strengths of their analysis is that they acknowledge the interplay of policy, fact and event with biography, perception and bias. This is particularly important in a small system in a small country where the potential for general myopia is great. They comment on the impatience of government with the policy community in writing that,

"Corporate management, the reorganisation of local government into larger units, and attempts to improve the planning and management of public expenditure, are all indicative of administrative impatience with the limitations of segmented and professionally permeated policy communities as instruments of policy."[106]

The policy community was still powerful and still to some extent fed on the Scottish 'myth' and was deeply persuasive to those who shared in it. McPherson and Raab found that it ordered their understanding of the nature of Scotland and the schools that served it, carrying with it blindness to certain areas and arbitrary attachment to others. This

emphasis on the interaction of influence and biography is of importance in any understanding of Scottish education and will be considered in the present work.

McPherson and Raab therefore offer a picture of Scottish educational policy making which shows the system to be a relatively centralised one which has lost some of its power to forces outside education and outside Scotland. Over the years since 1945 the system expanded and became more uniform. This led to the need to relinquish some control but also to opportunities to promote widespread change in an increasingly uniform system. For them the policy community had power and influence mainly over the detail of the system rather than the most fundamental decisions. It is hoped that Adapting to Change will put some of the above ideas to the test and either support them or suggest modifications.

Evidence from this study will be used to comment on the existence and power of education professionals. In particular the influence in Adapting to Change of those designated members of Humes' 'Leadership Class' will be examined. This analysis will, while sharing with McPherson and Raab the importance of considering fluctuations over a long term and to the ideals and biographies held by those involved in the dispute, consider whether or not their reluctance to form a grand theory around the currently available evidence is justified.

Overall, Humes takes a unidimensional view which may have validity at one level but may not be an adequate description of the mechanics of decision making within the whole system (if in fact such a description is possible). In particular his analysis does not take into

account the experience of conflict within a contracting system when central government is strongly politically opposed to local government. In addition Humes, and also McPherson and Raab, consider a broad sweep of policy which does not enable them to look in detail at the spectrum of contributors to educational policy making, both from within the educational world and outwith it. Nor do these studies look at power at various levels within education but instead concentrate on the highest levels. Further, particularly for McPherson and Raab, their subject matter was located in the era before the ascendancy of the power of the radical Right in Britain. In subsequent years much has changed. In this thesis, study will be made of the 1980's in which Scottish education faced a fundamental challenge to many of the cooperative and social democratic ideals; ideals which to a greater or lesser extent were accepted throughout the education community and throughout Scotland as a whole. Here, the focus is on one particular issue which enables concentration on the detail of educational change at many levels of action, from the Prime Minister to pupils' action groups.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to consider some of the main descriptive tools used by those who have taken an interest in analysis of power and policy, in the relationship between central and local government in general and within Scottish education in particular. It has draw from the wider literature on power and government as well as that concerned with educational policy making. It has considered theoretical issues which will be of importance in the understanding of the mechanics of Adapting to Change. Further, it has attempted to highlight some key issues which emerge in important, modern writing on Scottish education policy,

namely that of Humes and of McPherson and Raab and to the consideration of these issues in the case under study. While the concepts described above are essentially very rough measures there is value in their use in order to compare with other educational systems and other parts of government. The application of widely used concepts of government do help set in context actions taken in the case under study and help to make some sense of the complexities of messy political disputes and contribute to the critical expansion to work on Scottish educational policy making.

The ideals and biographies of most people outside central government led to an acceptance of state-funded, local authority-run, comprehensive schooling which in a West of Scotland context appeared unremarkable but was quite remarkable when considered alongside the challenges to such a system in Britain as a whole during the Thatcher years. It will be seen that parents were determined in their opposition to closure plans and the part played by them in the policy making process is instructive. In Adapting to Change political will was not lacking; in fact it may be that professional will and faith was lacking and this in itself points to the further weakening of the power of professionals. These issues will be returned to in chapters 6 and 7, after considering the detail of Adapting to Change.

As will be described in later chapters one striking fact which emerged from Adapting to Change when considered in terms of the input of the SED of and central government was the 'hands off' position taken by the former and the selective input made by the latter. It is interesting to ask to what extent were the various developments in this period a concerted

attempt to break down another layer of 'cooperativism' in Scotland. The Adapting to Change exercise offers the chance to examine the reactions of public and professionals to educational ideas promoted by the Right. It also gives a chance to study Labour Party decision making in times of contraction. The next chapter will develop the empirical aspect of this study, will explore its rationale and the methods adopted for studying Adapting to Change. It will highlight problems of access and consider sources and quality of evidence.

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Chapter 3. Rationale and Methods

3.1 Introduction

The unwillingness of the Scottish educational community to look critically at itself is an interesting reflection of the nature of that community and of Scottish life. As mentioned in chapter 2 there has been until the 1980's a shortage of anything other than books of the 'rise and progress' or 'acts and facts' style on Scottish education. Of the 'acts and facts' school McPherson and Raab comment,

"This body of work did not convey a sense of the process of policy-making, and it did little to question the received wisdom about the basic structure of the system and the soundness of the service it delivered. Its main characteristic, however, is that there is not much of it."[1]

Some of the reasons for this have already been explored in chapter 2 where the development, in the 1980's, of a body of critical analysis was highlighted. In the period under discussion in this thesis, this critical literature was more evident but still not in large quantities. Government education policy was criticised but this criticism was led by the political parties, parents and the trades unions, all of whom had vested interests and could only be seen as partisan. The academic community, with a few notable exceptions, avoided education policy as an area for research.[2] Those who did become involved sometimes found themselves involved in public arguments with government ministers on the other. This reflected first the smallness of the system, secondly an increased frustration of members of the academic community with the direction of educational research (and its funding) and their dissatisfaction with the direction of Scottish education in general, and thirdly, an attitude in government which questioned the right of criticism of government

policy by publicly-funded researchers.

It is important that policy making in Scottish education is continually examined and the present work is an attempt to add to the literature. This chapter will describe the rationale and and methods of the study of Adapting to Change made in this thesis. It will firstly examine the status and objectivity of work on this case and explore the reasons why Adapting to Change is important in the study of education and government. It will consider the opportunities offered by the Scottish context and by the particular case studied. Secondly the chapter will describe the methods used and discuss the evidence examined in the study.

3.2 Rationale

Any account of the process of events is highly selective. Taylor, in a classic paper on neutrality in political science,[3] points out that some positivist political scientists have tended to claim that the business of normative theory, making recommendations and evaluating different courses of action, should be entirely separated from the study of facts and from the theoretical efforts to account for them. This idea that values are independent of facts is one which has appeal when trying to attain a level of objectivity as, for example in the physical sciences, but is untenable in the social sciences. The example of McCarthyism in the late 1940's United States is used by Taylor who notes that this could be studied in terms of the struggle between the Legislature and Executive or alternatively in terms of the personality structure of certain sections of the American population or again by looking at the role of the newly rich of that era who were excluded from the East Coast establishment. Each of these alternatives would set social scientists on particular trails which would

exclude the possibility of certain conclusions as a result of the focus chosen for investigation. For example, a psychological investigation would be unlikely to produce explanations based on economic factors and vice versa. The selection of measures says something about the researcher and sets parameters on what sort of findings will result.

An empirical study, such as that of Adapting to Change, must have a target level for study (e.g. the effect on individuals of school closures or the effect of the world economy on peripheral regions). It is also likely to employ criteria such as pluralism and corporatism, or educational attainment and involvement in community politics which, by their very nature, say something about the values of the researcher and about what s/he will focus on. A study of Adapting to Change which focussed on the individual child or family could examine personal upsets and feelings of powerlessness but would not explore in depth the impact of New Right ideology on central government. Further the examination of topics such as pluralism and corporatism downplays the role of, for instance, the impact of divorce on parental involvement in the issue. As Taylor states,

".. the non- neutrality of the theoretical findings of political science need not surprise us. In setting out a given framework, a theorist is also setting out the gamut of possible polities and policies. But a political framework cannot fail to contain some, even implicit, conception of human needs, wants and purposes." [4]

It is therefore important to state the reasons for selecting the topic and level of study. The approach taken to the interaction between theory and method in this research is much as described by Jupp and Norris, in that theory orientates the research and defines what is problematic.[5] It provides much of the language and concepts and leads to concentration on a particular level. This may be balanced (as in the case of this research)

by the personal experience of researcher as practitioner. Identification of issues on both the theoretical and professional agendas provides an indication of their importance.

The rationale for selecting of Adapting to Change for study is straightforward. Education is central to the life of Scotland both in practical and symbolic terms. As in any country schools are expected to help produce well educated citizens with the necessary skills for the modern world. Additionally, in Scotland the education system (along with the law and the Church) is one of the pillars of the separate identity of the country. With the vast majority of school children being educated in the public sector that sector has immense power over the future. Therefore the administration of education by the regions and the relationships between the regions and central government on the one hand and the community on the other is important to the future of the country. In an early phase of the present research consideration was given to cases which could potentially highlight the above issues. Possible study of comparison in approaches taken to falling school rolls by Dumfries and Galloway Region and Cumbria County Council or examination of Lothian Region's approach to school reorganisation were explored. However, investigation showed that in the late eighties there was no doubt that Adapting to Change was by far the biggest and most open window on the local government of education.

The bias imported to any study of a complex political issue is acknowledged and it is hoped that consciousness of this bias will guard against the invalidation of findings. Value judgments must be made. In this study, press reports from one set of newspapers are preferred to those of another. The researcher decided that the reports in the broadsheets

were fuller and more accurate and less personalised than those in the tabloids. A value judgment implicit in this is that the detailed account of a council meeting is nearer the real issue than a story about a child who has to cross three extra main roads to get to a new school. In this study this is justified by the focus on policy making. Individual stories were important but were part of a larger picture.

It is hoped that this thesis will not only contribute to an understanding of educational policy making but will also be of interest in the wider understanding of local government for two reasons. Firstly, as education is the largest area of local government activity, both in terms of expenditure and number of employees, an understanding of education policy making is crucial to the understanding of local government as a whole. Secondly, and of more fundamental importance, education is central to the production and reproduction of society. It is the means through which government and society attempt, implicitly and explicitly, to form the attitudes and behaviour of the young. Education therefore offers an arena not only for the observation of changes in policy concerning its own structures and practices but also for consideration of proposals regarding education which reflect the deeper agenda for change of attitudes and behaviour within society. Thus policy in education is central to the study of government, local and national.

The level of study was indicated by the interest in power and influence. At ministerial level, although great power is wielded, it is over a wide range of issues, leaving much scope for those below that level. At school level, while headteachers have some influence they are increasingly bound by national and regional constraints. Here it is argued that a crucial focus of power and influence is somewhere in the area

influenced by senior councillors and members of the directorates. At that level power is great but is close enough to the 'chalk face' to have *detailed* influence on what occurs within classrooms. Hence the selection of Adapting to Change focussed on the regional administration and on influences on that administration both from above (central government) and below (schools and communities).

Further this thesis focuses on the Scottish system but, as Bell and Grant comment, though the constituent parts of the British Isles have separate administrative arrangements, they are parts of a larger complex linked together culturally, economically and in some cases politically. There is, they argue, a constant interaction between the systems.[6] They further state that British educationalists ignore the wealth of comparative materials available on their own doorsteps. Scotland is a small country with a local authority and educational system which is sufficiently distinct to offer contrast with those of the rest of the UK while, at the same time, operating within a similar framework and under similar economic, cultural and political pressures. There is therefore the opportunity to observe the impact of political change common to all of the UK in a distinctive Scottish arena. Adapting to Change shows the Scottish policy process in action and through this informs analysis of the policy process in the wider UK system. For example the promotion of New Right ideology, and the demographic downturn in the period under study affected the whole of the UK but the systems which these affected were different in certain important respects. In contrast to England, Scotland had a powerful and relatively united teaching force and a more or less uniform system of school provision in which participation in the private sector was minimal (at least outside Edinburgh) and the six year comprehensive the norm. There is therefore

the opportunity to view the Scottish system as similar in many ways to other parts of the UK system but different in key areas. Thus insight may be gained and conclusions gathered from elsewhere can be tested against the Scottish system, hence giving greater validity to findings.

Chapter 2 described some of the main theoretical ideas used in the analysis of policy and power in local government in general and education in particular. The discussion focused on power as central to the study of education and government and considered the implications of this for Scottish education in the 1980's. As noted in chapter 2, power will be taken to characterise the ability of individuals or groups to take a particular course of action against the declared wishes of others or in the face of apathy. Looking at the era since 1945 there are too many examples of change (comprehensivisation, universal certification, abolition of corporal punishment, school boards) which have been brought about against the wishes of substantial sections of the 'educational world' to pretend that the system developed purely through partnership and cooperation. The present study considers the case of school closures, an issue which arouses public and professional hostility, and which in the majority of cases either necessitates the use of power by government or provokes sufficient reaction from interest groups to prevent government from exercising its will. Therefore education and education policy making, particularly in the provision or withdrawal of resources, is profoundly political. It was argued in the planning of Adapting to Change, and will figure prominently in subsequent chapters, that resource decisions should have been made on educational rather than political grounds. This argument may have had some force when expounded amongst educational professionals but it ignores the fact that educational provision has great social significance for the 'consumers' of

education. Parents and local communities see educational provision not only as delivering the curriculum and being of intrinsic value but as a social 'good' which has exchange value, affecting life chances and the standing of individuals and communities. Thus the education service bears a heavy load with technical, social and attitudinal elements.

It is therefore of crucial importance to tease out the various strands of power and influence in policy making. The issues raised by falling school rolls have remained largely unexamined in the Scottish context though work has been carried out on parental choice resulting from the 1980 education act which, as mentioned in chapter 1, accelerated the decline in rolls of some schools.[7] Writing in 1984, MacFadyen and McMillan stated that several areas needed to be examined in connection with falling school rolls. These included; the relationship of organisational to curricular change; the process of decision making in and between agencies involved; the effect of changes on selected groups of people touched by the phenomenon, for example parents, teachers and pupils and the tendency for educational opportunity to expand or contract as a result.[8] They went on to state that planned reduction of schools and rolls is essential in order to maintain the curriculum and avoid excessive expenditure. This thesis will explore some of these issues and will consider what emerged from an attempted planned reduction of schools.

Apart from the intrinsic interest of Adapting to Change there are several reasons why study of this issue is important and useful. It was arguably the most controversial and interesting area of educational policy in the 1980's and was the work of the largest and most influential local authority in Scotland. Further, Adapting to Change was organised rather than piecemeal and therefore rationales had to be made open on all sides.

It also drew a large number of players onto the field who would not have become involved in a lesser controversy. It arose at a time when the Labour Party was reevaluating its commitment to traditional policies in the wake of successive electoral defeats. The strains between the left and right of the Labour Party were apparent in Strathclyde, with a moderate leadership which did not often challenge the government in a similar fashion to more militant councils. In addition to the left/ right cleavage, Adapting to Change reflected a move from paternalistic and authoritarian socialism to a more pluralist and community based socialism. The evidence shows that Strathclyde found this development uncomfortable. However the greatest strain on the Party was simply that of becoming the party of cuts, a charge more often levelled at the Tories.

In community terms Adapting to Change was controversial, as will be seen in later chapters, because it affected the aspect of education of most concern to parents and communities. As mentioned above, concerns over education are at their sharpest where the social value of education is threatened. Parents do not only see education as something of intrinsic worth but are also concerned about the exam results schools can produce, the types of children their sons and daughters socialise with, the relative social status of schools and the way a school reflects their community. This community can be based on geography, religion or social class but the issue of school closures brings to the surface a complex set of personal and communal anxieties. While other areas such as curricular reform generated much debate, this tended to be amongst educational professionals, or as in the unusual case of resistance to National Testing in the late 1980's, was sponsored by teachers' organisations or nationally active parents groups. In comparison to curricular reform Adapting to Change raised a far greater level of concern and involvement. While

teachers and others have legitimate philosophical concerns over educational developments, there are also workload and career implications associated with curricular reform. In the 1980's these carried with them disruption and extra work which caused teachers to tread warily. On the other hand these reforms were funded by government and extra staff 'cover' and resources were provided. Further, with the creation of new 'development' posts career opportunities resulted. There was, therefore, the impetus for a debate within education which parents did not engage in because the extra work and opportunities did not directly affect them. Other factors, such as the technical nature of many of the issues, the lack of a tradition of parental involvement and the continued faith in Scottish education which was maintained by the community worked against great parental involvement. This lack of involvement was in sharp contrast to Adapting to Change.

It is suggested here that the Strathclyde rationalisation programme was the most ambitious and most important example of the management of contraction in Scotland and perhaps in the UK. The issue of educational contraction forces politicians, the public and professionals to air their views on crucial areas of education. Questions come to the fore on type of school, size of school, loyalties to school, community, religion, profession and political party. The wide range of individuals and organisations who did become involved in Adapting to Change added to its importance and usefulness in the study of policy making. As an example it will be argued that, in contrast to the common assertion that middle class groups gain from consultation processes, in Strathclyde middle class and the most disadvantaged groups gained, because they could both appeal to powerful political forces.[9] This left 'employed' working class parents (in the most deprived areas large numbers of parents were unemployed) with less

chance of influencing the decision making process. Looking at all of the above, it is hoped that a more subtle view of power and policy in education will emerge which will take account of more than the central parties often considered; central government, local government and teachers' organisations.

3.3 The Research Climate

In investigating controversial areas, research can be affected by the emotions aroused by the issue. While it is appreciated that all research in the social sciences throws up difficulties of cooperation and access the present research threw up problems of access which spoke a great deal about the concerns of those in power and their wariness of the attentions of those interested in their actions for academic purposes. There was a marked reluctance shown by many of the main players in Adapting to Change to become involved in this research. Some of the reasons for this are suggested below and these reasons reflect the nature of Adapting to Change in particular, and to some extent the Council and Scottish education as a whole.

Although some reluctance is perfectly understandable the anxiety raised in this case seemed out of the ordinary. Three main reasons for this reluctance to become involved emerge. Firstly the effects on individuals of Adapting to Change, which will be explored in Chapter 6, were important and there is no doubt that the issue had profound and ongoing personal effects. Political careers were effectively ended and ambition thwarted for some councillors while others' careers benefited. Some officials suffered embarrassing position shifts while others gained significant promotions. On a more personal level, the break-down in health of some participants has been attributed to the experiences of

Adapting to Change. As a result, even research carried out two to four years after the event created a high level of anxiety. One councillor replied to a request for an assistance by stating,

"I have delayed replying to you for one very good reason and that is that I had taken a vow at the time of the demise of the school closure issue that I would not comment at any time in the future."[10]

At the height of the controversy councillors were publicly vilified on the covers of newspapers and were harangued at public meetings. They were also subjected to attacks from fellow councillors and so refusal to reopen wounds is understandable. Further, in a project which was seen to fare as badly as as Adapting to Change, it would have been likely that participants would have felt that investigation would have led to blame being apportioned.

Secondly, during the eighties Glasgow housed the headquarters (or Scottish headquarters) of a wide cross-section of the media. Within a two mile radius of Strathclyde House were to be found the headquarters of BBC Scotland, Scottish Television, BBC Radio Scotland, Radio Clyde, the *Glasgow Herald,* the *Glasgow Evening Times,* the *Daily Record,* the *Sunday Mail,* the *Scottish Daily Express,* the *Scottish Sunday Express,* the *Sunday Times Scottish Section* and the Scottish Edition of the *Sun* and *News of the World.* The area also housed a number of other publications interested in Adapting to Change including church publications and community newspapers. In addition most other Scottish and UK titles had representation in the city and so, while Strathclyde used the press as much if not more than any local authority and employed a large public relations staff, there was a fear that research might well lead to another expose on Strathclyde. As one official put it in discussion on this

research, "I hope I don't see this on the front of the Daily Record tomorrow." [11] The Council, as the largest organisation in town, was of interest to all the media but was of particular interest to the inquisitive *Glasgow Evening Times* and the seemingly hostile *Sunday Times Scottish Section*, one of whose major writers on Adapting to Change was a former Conservative Member of Parliament.[12] Interesting observations on the Scottish media are made by Lady Thatcher who stated that hardly any Scottish newspapers supported the Conservatives and that the 'electronic media' were hostile.[13]

Newspapers were influential in Scotland. As Magnus Linklater, the Editor of *The Scotsman* commented,

"The Scots like their newspapers-and they like them to be Scottish. Not only do they read more per head of population than anywhere else in the UK, they have sustained a remarkably healthy indigenous press during a period when English regional morning titles have suffered a decline."[14]

As mentioned above, many councillors had been portrayed as the 'butchers' of schools and as the whole process had gone badly wrong they were very wary of the press. While not wishing to overemphasise the 'goldfish bowl' nature of the situation there were undoubtedly a number of journalists interested in the workings of the Council and a greater number interested when things went wrong. This, plus the particular sensitivity around Adapting to Change, made Strathclyde an authority which did not give an unqualified welcome to researchers. [15] This had echoes in the view of the Labour Party in the 1960's which Harvie describes as,

"...centralized, authoritarian, equally suspicious of socialist theoreticians and the Scottish 'capitalist' press."[16]

Though often put under the media spotlight, Strathclyde Regional Council was by no means the most radical or controversial local authority in Britain. Strathclyde councillors were used to power and though they enjoyed large majorities they had not implemented radical programmes of the type which brought Liverpool Council and the GLC into conflict with central government. The Labour Party in the 1980's was in the middle of a left/right struggle at least in part focussed on the way in which the financial and legislative pressures placed on local government were to be dealt with. The tensions created by Strathclyde being portrayed as a Labour administration presiding over 'cuts' were very real and the press, as mentioned above, was happy to criticise the authority. Newspapers earned particular wrath of the Council when the editor of the *Sunday Times*, as described in chapter 6, involved the Prime Minister in the campaign to save Paisley Grammar from closure.

On a wider level, it was unusual for those involved in Scottish education policy making to be asked to comment on the reasons for actions and decisions. This was a reflection on the closed political climate of the time which led to repeated political calls for a freedom of information act which would lead to public bodies having to justify their withholding of information rather than the contemporary situation where the public had little access to information even of a non sensitive and comparatively trivial nature. The relationship between the lack of a strong critical literature and taciturn officials can be seen as something of a 'chicken and egg' situation. Raab[17] has criticised Humes for making the assumption that those involved in policy making at the highest level would be unwilling to talk of their experiences and McPherson and Raab demonstrated that many retired officials could be persuaded to participate

in critical research. While it is true that some inroads can be made it is certainly not easy, with, as acknowledged by McPherson and Raab, Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act preventing civil servants from disclosing information trusted in confidence to them or obtained in the course of their work.[18] While the Act did not apply to local authority employees the culture of secrecy was common across sectors of state administration. This was apparent in negotiations associated with this research.

3.4 The Research Focus

Even if only newspaper reports are considered there is enough material on Adapting to Change Phase 1 to fill a volume and when the build up of events before Adapting to Change and the later phases of the process are considered the amount of information grows considerably. The examination of the documentary material in this thesis will be broadly restricted to the time between the setting up of the working party which produced the Adapting to Change[19] document (June 1986) and the closure of the first schools as a result of Adapting to Change in June 1988.

The selection of these beginning and end points has been made for several reasons. The first was simply manageability. In order to investigate the contributions of a wide range of people the time-scale was restricted. Secondly, though there had been several attempts in Strathclyde to tackle the issue of falling school rolls, most notably in the Paisley area in the early 1980's, Adapting to Change was the first attempt by Strathclyde (and the first significant attempt in Scotland) to adopt a region-wide strategy on school reorganisation which examined the issue on a wide geographical scale and which in terms of its approach did not restrict itself to the specifics of a particular school. It was an exercise which led Strathclyde, an authority which in its short existence had been

steeped in the psychology of expansion, into a new phase of contraction; a phase which raised a new set of mostly unpleasant issues with which the Council had to deal. The closure attempts of the early eighties were on a small scale, and essentially *ad hoc* in nature, and further the later phases of Adapting to Change were not as controversial or interesting as Phase 1 due, in part, to the application of lessons learned from Phase 1.

3.5 Areas Studied

Investigation of Adapting to Change was made by study of the process at both regional and 'area' level. Examination was made of four areas in particular, Paisley, north west Glasgow, Bridgeton/Dalmarnock and East Kilbride. In this thesis detailed description and analysis is given of two of these areas, Paisley and Glasgow North West (as this area was named by the Region). It will be seen that parents were were determined in their opposition to closure plans and the part played by them in the policy making process is instructive. The others are considered briefly in order to extend the validity of the study. The areas and key characteristics are given in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Adapting to Change Areas and Key Characteristics

Area	Division	Size	Controversy
Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock	Glasgow	Small	Yes
East Kilbride	Lanark	Medium	No
Glasgow north west	Glasgow	Large	Yes
Paisley	Renfrew	Medium	Yes

The above were chosen to be representative of Phase 1 Strathclyde area review groups. They varied in the division of Strathclyde in which they were located, in their size and in the level of controversy aroused by proposals. Paisley was a town in which the schools were seen as part of an integrated educational provision. The town had distinct boundaries and previous experiences of school review had reinforced the integrated nature of the school system. Glasgow North West had no such sense of identity and the schools did not form, nor were they seen to form such an integrated pattern. Glasgow North West contained a large number of schools and posed a complex set of problems for its review group. Paisley and East Kilbride were medium sized areas outside Glasgow while Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock was a small area with few schools. In both of the main areas of study there were controversial proposals to close schools but the pattern of closure differed within areas and between areas as did the campaigns to save schools. There were also contrasts in socioeconomic statuses with Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock being high on most indices of deprivation while Glasgow North West contained some of the most affluent parts of the city. There is a paradox in that over Strathclyde as a whole the most representative area review group would have been one which proposed little rationalisation as many groups opted for a non-controversial path. Hence, while there is less material for study in the case of East Kilbride, it is included as an example of that approach.

The areas chosen provide examples of closure threatened schools of various kinds; Roman Catholic and non-denominational, popular and unpopular; large and small; schools serving affluent areas and schools serving deprived areas.

The most important indicator in the study of schools is the socioeconomic status of pupils and parents. This, along with associated factors such as educational experience of parents is one of the best indicator of performance of pupils and involvement of parents. While it would be possible to give detailed figures on the socioeconomic status of the areas under consideration, the differences within areas were as significant as those between areas. The nature of the two main review groups described was that they covered a patchwork of different types of housing, containing people in widely differing social circumstances.

For example Glasgow North West contained Kelvindale Ward which had an unemployment rate of 7.0% and also Partick which had an unemployment rate of 19.3%.[20] Some schools in Glasgow North West served catchment which contained a large proportion of expensive owner-occupied houses while others served large, deprived council housing schemes. In the West End of Glasgow schools contained pupils from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds while in other areas there were few pupils from such backgrounds. Within other area review groups socioeconomic factors also varied, though not quite as widely as in Glasgow North West, rendering attempts to analyse statistics for areas as a whole less than useful. Subsequent chapters will demonstrate that the areas selected represent a wide variety of schools in a number of different circumstances.

3.6 Access to Materials and Individuals

The study of the process of Adapting to Change was made using a wide variety of primary sources as well as some secondary sources. Access to these materials reflects some of the difficulties encountered in the study. From an initial enquiry from one of the supervisors of this research in

November 1988 it took until June 1990 before agreement was reached on access to documentation. Within this frustrating period the researcher was interviewed in Glasgow by different senior officers of the Education Department, detailed proposals were asked for and further interviews arranged. During the negotiation period, access was given to the files of one sub-regional office on the instructions of a sub-regional education officer only for it to be withdrawn at the end of a second day of study on the instructions of Regional Headquarters. Finally, access was given to files on condition that no interviews were conducted with employees. This restriction prohibited questioning of officials and teachers on matters of opinion while matters of fact could be checked with Directorate staff. While large scale interviews with a wide range of staff would have been outwith the scope of this thesis, ideally interviews would have been conducted with some of the key officials. Councillors were considered to be free agents and approaches to them gained a mixture of support, non-reply to letters and outright rejection. There was no pattern to reasons for rejection with pressure of work and unwillingness to go over old ground being cited mainly. Access was gained to a large amount of materials from school campaign groups but no reply was received to several requests for information from the Roman Catholic Church.

3.7 Sources

The research employed four main sources, Regional archives; campaign group files, publicly available materials and interviews with councillors. The most important primary source used was the archive of materials kept in sub-regional headquarters in Hamilton, Glasgow and Paisley. These archives were made available by two of the above offices for study on their premises and by a third office whose officials kindly

allowed much the material to be taken away. Some papers were also made available by Regional Headquarters and also important were the files of campaign groups who lent a substantial amount of written material. Willingness to allow access seemed to diminish as seniority increased. For instance staff at Education Officer level were particularly helpful while those in more senior positions in the directorate were much more guarded. This was due in part to the understandable caution of senior officers but also the the close interest taken by senior councillors in publicity which could show the Council in a bad light. Mistakes and/or bad publicity would lead to senior councillors taking issue with senior officials who would in turn be expected to rebuke or discipline more junior officials.

All of the material made available (as well as publicly available sources as described below) was examined and a recording made of its nature and of important information contained. As a result a digest of Adapting to Change, both Regionally and locally (related to the four selected areas), was created. Only a proportion of this information is directly referred to in this thesis. For example, full recording was made of available documentation concerning Bridgeton/Dalmarnock and East Kilbride though these reviews are only briefly described in this work. In order to examine the Region's approach to school rationalisation before 1986 information on pre Adapting to Change reviews made of schools in Paisley between 1979 and 1986 was recorded. In addition the Roman Catholic sector in Paisley, in which disputes dragged on beyond the end of Phase 1 of Adapting to Change, was studied. Similarly the reviews of all thirteen secondary schools in Glasgow North West were examined, though only three are given detailed consideration in this thesis. Also examined was a substantial amount of other documentation, of cases

other than Adapting to Change (relating to other local authorities, as detailed above), which was considered in the preliminary stages of the research. This material helped establish the aims of the thesis but eventually fell outside the direct focus of the research.

Generally, selection for inclusion of material was made in order to a) provide representative examples, b) highlight particularly interesting issues and c) avoid repetition. An attempt is made in this thesis to reflect the overall nature of Adapting to Change. However some issues, such as the Paisley controversy, received so much publicity and affected the course of the process so profoundly, that they are examined in detail. On the other hand, through the course of the research, it became clear that there was a repetition of issues across area review groups. This was particularly so in the cases of groups which did not propose closures. Further, many themes reoccurred in various parents' groups campaigns. As a result details are not repeated for each area review group and campaign.

As to the materials, the overriding impression was of their bulk. Sources often had duplicate copies of materials available from other sources but each was a rich, and still by no means exhausted seam. The vast amount of material helped to allay fears of the selective release of papers to the researcher. While some documents were likely to have been kept private their sheer bulk made the task of sifting through files for 'sensitive' material almost impossible, particularly when at the time of filing it would have seemed most unlikely that any outsider would inspect the contents. In addition the files contained enough sensitive material to indicate that they had not been censored.

The materials made available by the Region and campaign groups, and or available to the general public were of the following kinds.

1) The formal and publicly available documents which were issued by the Region at various stages of Adapting to Change. These included publications of the area review groups, formal consultation documents and publicity materials.

2) Briefing papers which were issued to councillors at various stages of both the review and Education Committee stages of Adapting to Change. These are a particularly rich source and contain much detail which study of minutes misses completely. In particular these papers contain discussion on options which did not emerge as proposals and convey the influence and position of the Directorate.

3) Protest documents and letters from campaign groups and individuals. Of great importance here was the access to protest letters as this gave insight into the opinions of the general public as well as insight into the opinions of the articulate minority who inevitably gained much attention from the media and, on review of the files, from Strathclyde officials. This correspondence was large and varied from sophisticated analyses of parts of Adapting to Change to contributions which could only be described as ill-tempered and bigoted.

4) Copies of letters and memos both from within and outwith the Council and campaign groups. This included in-house discussion documents and campaign group planning materials which seemed to be very much not for the public gaze, such as (very) critical appraisals of Adapting to Change by members of the directorate and lists of 'soft' councillors who could be swayed in votes by campaign groups.

5) Handwritten or annotated documents. Apart from letters from members of the public, direct use has not been made of this sort of material because, although it illuminates the thought process of

participants, it was usually unclear who the author was and quite what the status of the documents. While some of the comments could have been crucial they could also have been unimportant ideas which were abandoned almost immediately.

6) Other sources used were the press, particularly the *Glasgow Herald, The Scotsman* and the *Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)* which all provided a sober and comprehensive cover of the issues involved. Also used were various local and church newspapers whose quality of reporting was more uneven. Judgments and other legal documents were consulted as were the formally publicly available minutes of the various committees of the Regional Council, publications of the Scottish Office and Hansard.

In order to supplement the above the personal cooperation of a number of individuals was sought. The condition of the Region that no access would be sought to regional employees in matters of opinion was adhered to. Having said this, several officials were generous in their provision of access to materials and factual information. As mentioned above, councillors varied in their openness. In the end four members of the Education Committee, three of these occupying crucial positions contributed. These three councillors candidly answered a prepared set of questions which attempted to triangulate with some of the other sources of evidence and gain insight into some of the motives behind Adapting to Change. This analysis of motivational factors was further aided by use of some of the correspondence mentioned above and by interviews in and statements to the press.

A late, but very useful addition to the study, came when Margaret Thatcher, published her memoirs of her time as Prime Minister. Her

book, *The Downing Street Years*, gave an unexpected insight into the politics of the mid-eighties and directly commented upon the relationship between Downing Street, Scottish Office ministers and Scotland in general.[21] The book and the publicity launch surrounding it also produced reactions from other politicians and a series of interviews with Mrs Thatcher which contributed to the overall picture. The importance of Adapting to Change was highlighted by the fact that Thatcher referred to the dispute in her review of her premiership.

3.8 Quality of Evidence

The quantity of evidence available has been mentioned above but its quality was less clear. Hakim describes the use of administrative records in research and states,

"As a general rule, information that is essential or central to the activities of an organisation will be more carefully monitored and of better quality than peripheral items."[22]

While Hakim's description may hold true in some areas of administration, the Adapting to Change file, while central, bore all hallmarks of administration under pressure with items misfiled, editions not updated and omissions in documentation. The archives were essentially working files which were stored in sub-regional offices. The first result of this was that the order in which material was stored was variable and the files were often in some disarray. This shortcoming was overcome by careful recording but more difficult to rectify were the problems of gaps in materials and sketchy recording.

Gaps were of two kinds. Firstly it is likely that some important documents, in particular correspondence, would have been held in the private files of senior councillors and officials. Some documents may not

have reached the overall office files but even so, a number of letters and documents produced by senior figures in the Region were available in general files and also appeared in campaign group files. As mentioned above there was no evidence of censorship of the files which were made available and it would have been unlikely that anyone would have taken the trouble to trawl through files in three sub-regional offices. There were obvious gaps in the files where a particular set of minutes or particular consultation documents were missing. Some of these gaps were filled from other files within or outwith the Region while some remained unfilled.

Of the documentation which was available, quality varied tremendously. This variation was a source of information in itself in that it reflected the sophistication of some groups and officials in comparison to others. Of less help was the reduction in the amount of detail contained in minutes, particularly of area review group meetings as time went on.

The use of minutes and official records of meetings has limitations. The minutes gave a good account of attendance and decisions reached but were less useful in noting disagreements or the sources of arguments and counter-arguments. Here a literal triangulation comes into play. Minutes and consultation papers provide exact details which are absent from or not remembered in verbal accounts; less formal documents show the development of ideas and arguments and personal letters and verbal testimony expose the reasoning behind decisions and gives insight into the motives behind some of the decisions made in Adapting to Change.

While the verbal evidence is important, it suffers from being restricted to interviews with a small group of people with a particular opinion on the issue. There was also the problem that at the time of interview the councillors were involved in the later stages of Adapting to Change and their recollection of events was not as accurate as it might have been. In addition to this interview material the correspondence referred to above and statements to and writings in the press gave an extension to the speculation on the motivational aspects of those involved. It is an important extension to the work of Kogan and McPherson and Raab into the 'assumptive worlds' of policy makers to include detailed analysis of various influential individuals in and around Scottish local authorities.

3.9 Discussion

Overall by its nature, the research is a view of Scottish education from inside Scottish education. The researcher was part of the system (as a teacher) and those centrally involved in Adapting to Change were part of the (at least local) education establishment. Problems surrounding neutrality have been discussed above but to counter the 'insider' there is the positive aspect of the researcher being sensitive to some of the subtleties of the system. For instance an outsider may not be sensitised to the pressures of the introduction of Standard Grade or the power of the Roman Catholic Church or the Glasgow/ non-Glasgow dichotomy in Scottish culture.

Similar points can be made about any research which studies the writings and opinions of a like minded group of people who share a common experience of the system. A common dedication to the system may lead to a conscious or unconscious distortion of facts which may support certain ideals e.g. the classlessness of Scottish education or the

political neutrality of the directorate. While an awareness of these possibilities is useful, in this case the possibility of a collective cover up was reduced greatly by conflict. The conflicts in Adapting to Change were very strong and stretched the West of Scotland cooperative consensus at many points until the possibility of a cover up was remote. In addition, as in no other contemporary education issue, the views of the public were heard in a strong and well informed way. The reasoning of councillors and officials was dissected in public, tempers were lost and positions taken on issues which did not often emerge in public in Labour-dominated Strathclyde. This gave the opportunity for studying the issues raised above, in particular the interface between the public, councillors and officials, and raised fundamental educational issues such as the organisation of educational provision and the distribution of educational 'goods'.

The investigation of this rather complex and controversial topic exposes the researcher to a wide variety of influences and opinions from those involved in the issue. There are possibilities of distortion and selectivity in the choice of areas to be investigated, in the weight given to various opinions and arguments, and in particular in the interpretation of the large body of evidence amassed. While awareness of this leads to a great caution in the drawing of conclusions it also reinforces confidence in the validity of conclusions and promotes some level of sympathy for the various parties involved.

The evidence will be presented in the following three chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 will examine the process of Adapting to Change Phase 1, both regionally and as it affected some specific geographical areas. Chapter 6 will consider the same topic but will stand back a little and

consider the issue in relation to the various parties involved. There is of course an intimate relationship between the two. The facts of the process of the dispute are interesting in themselves as an attempt to wrestle with the most difficult educational problem of the era but the process also clearly highlights the relative positions and contributions of many of the key groups in Scottish education and local government. It is this interplay which is particularly important and which adds to the small though significant interest in the motivations behind the management of Scottish education.

[1] McPherson and Raab (1988) op. cit.,p. 53.

[2] See for examples Adler, Petch and Tweedie (1989) op. cit. Gray, McPherson, and Raffe (1983)op. cit. Humes. (1986) op. cit. Humes, W. and Paterson, H. (eds.), Scottish Culture and Scottish Education: 1800- 1980, (Edinburgh, John Donald), McPherson and Raab (1988), op. cit.

[3] Taylor, C. (1969) ' Neutrality in Political Science', in Laslett P. and Runciman W. G. (eds.) *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, (London, Blackwell), p. 26.

[4] Ibid., p. 55.

[5] Jupp, V. and Norris, C. (1993) 'Traditions in Documentary Analysis' in Hammersley, M. (ed.), *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice*, (London, Open University/ Sage).

[6] Bell, R. and Grant, N. (1977) *Patterns of Education in the British Isles*, (London, Allen and Unwin).

[7] Education (Scotland) Act, (Edinburgh, HMSO).

[8] MacFadyen, I. and McMillan, F. (1984) *The Management of Change at a Time of Falling School Rolls*, (Edinburgh, Scottish Council for Educational Research), p. 1.

[9] Adler, M. and Bondi, L. (1988) 'Delegation and Community Participation: An Alternative Approach to the Problems Created by Falling Schools Rolls' in Bondi, L. and Matthews, M. (eds.) *Education and Society: Studies in the Politics, Sociology and Geography of Education*, (London, Routledge), p. 65.

[10] Letter from prominent councillor active in Adapting to Change.

[11] Interview with senior Strathclyde official.

[12] Gerry Malone, Member of Parliament for Aberdeen South 1983-87.

[13] Thatcher, M. (1993) *The Downing Street Years*, (London, Harper Collins), p. 619.

[14] Linklater, M. (1992) 'The Media' in Linklater, M. and Denniston, R. (eds.) *Anatomy of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, Chambers), p. 126.

[15] In 1990 Strathclyde Region appointed an assistant director of education with responsibility for research. This may change the situation following a report commissioned by the Region from the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV).

[16] Harvie, C. (1993) *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes; Scotland Since 1914*, 2nd Edition, (Edinburgh, Mainstream), p. 146.

[17] Raab, C. (1987) 'The "Leadership Class" Dismissed: Humes' Critique of Scottish Education', in McCrone, D. (ed.), *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1987*, (Edinburgh, Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland).

[18] McPherson and Raab (1988) op. cit., p. 47.

[19] Strathclyde Regional Council (Nov. 1986) *Adapting to Change: Report of the Working Party on the Implications of Falling School Rolls.*

[20] City of Glasgow (1988) *Ward Profiles: August 1988*, (Glasgow, City of Glasgow)

[21] Thatcher, M. (1993) op. cit.

[22] Hakim, C. (1993) in Hammersley, M. op. cit.

Chapter 4. Adapting to Change in Action

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters theoretical and practical opportunities and difficulties in the study of Adapting to Change have been highlighted. It was made clear that the planning and development of Adapting to Change was complex and involved contributions from large numbers of individuals and groups. A central part of the daily lives of thousands of children, teachers and parents was threatened and the process was crucial to local politicians and officials, churches and interest groups. It was also important on a wider educational and political stage and involved all levels of politicians up to and including the Prime Minister. This chapter will be in two parts and will relate to the aims of the thesis as described in the introduction and expanded upon in chapter 2. The first part will describe the planning approach taken by Strathclyde to the issue of falling school rolls. It will examine the process leading up to the publication of "Adapting to Change" and will look at developments which laid foundations for realising the plans. The second part begins the examination of Adapting to Change in action as it affected a particular area, namely Paisley. The focus will be on the work of Paisley Area Review Group and its results. This will be considered from the period shortly before the opening of the Paisley review to the resolution of the last dispute concerning Paisley schools.

Chapters 4 and 5 will describe the conduct of Adapting to Change from different angles. This chapter will explore issues of the use and location of power on a Regional and area perspective. Paisley highlights the intervention of central government, interaction of parents' groups,

and the use of political and legal tactics to defend schools. Education in the town was seen as an interlinked system by all parties, thus making it ideal for this wider perspective. Glasgow North West offers varying examples of schools under threat giving insight into the treatment of areas of extreme deprivation, the position of small and demoralised schools and of single sex schools as well as the role of the Roman Catholic Church. The area is useful because, in contrast to Paisley, it was an administrative creation which was not seen by parents as a unit and as a result schools tended to be dealt with in isolation.

As mentioned in previous chapters the view taken in this thesis is that the best analysis of a complex issue such as Adapting to Change arises after consideration of documentary sources, written and oral opinion, biography and social and political background. Following from this argument the present chapter will not give a full picture. This will come after consideration of underlying social and personal issues in chapter 6. However, some discussion will be made on particular developments which relate to theoretical questions raised in preceding chapters.

Section 1 Falling School Rolls: Agenda for Action

4.2 The Planning Process

The demographic dip and central government financial pressure affected most British education authorities. It will be argued below that a combination of a particularly sharp fall in numbers, an overwhelming Labour majority and an increasing political confidence led Strathclyde to tackle an issue which other councils avoided. The Labour Party manifesto for the Regional Council elections of May 1986 stated,

"Falling school rolls must be seen as an opportunity to improve educational provision rather than a chance to save money."[1]

This statement echoed the sentiments of grassroots Labour opinion that the undisputed drop in rolls offered opportunities for improvements in education by releasing more *per capita* money to be spent on smaller numbers and giving more space for children and adults to make use of schools for academic and community purposes.

The voters duly returned the customary overwhelming Labour majority to Strathclyde Regional Council giving the administration the chance to tackle the issue.[2] It was not an issue any administration would have looked forward to, but the demographic facts, as described in chapter 1, and government financial restrictions forced it onto the agenda. Other local authorities did not grasp this nettle vigorously but the size of the Labour majority and the acute fall in pupil numbers in the West of Scotland gave Strathclyde the confidence and impetus to act. Prior attempts in Scotland to deal with falling rolls had either centred on the future of a particular school or on provision within a small area.[3] In addition the process of closure or reprieve had largely been confined to Regional proposals, followed by parents' protests and closure (or not) depending on political pressure. Adler and Bondi observe that,

"There is mounting evidence of a widespread failure by education authorities to develop rational methods for deciding which schools to close. Even where ... the education authority puts forward and attempts to justify criteria for retaining or closing schools, these are unlikely to be applied systematically precisely because of local opposition aroused ..." [4]

On 19 June 1986 the Regional Policy and Resources Committee set up

a Working Party under the chairmanship of a young councillor (Councillor Ian Davidson, subsequently to become Chairman of the Education Committee and Member of Parliament for Glasgow Govan) who had been outspoken in his criticism of Party leadership. There is some evidence (discussed in chapter 6) that this was considered a 'poisoned chalice' to be passed to a particularly difficult colleague who had been openly critical of the 'old guard'. It was planned that a report would be circulated to appropriate bodies with requests for comments by the end of February 1987. The terms of reference of the Working Party were to consider and report fully on the educational and financial implications of falling school rolls and surplus accommodation and to recommend how any policy judged desirable might be pursued. A very wide remit.

The Working Party was an officer/member group as described in chapter 1 and reflected the political make-up of the Council with seven Labour councillors, and one councillor each from the Liberal and Conservative Parties. Much input was made by officials, with then Depute Director (and future Director) of Education, Frank Pignatelli, playing a significant role.[5] The group met twelve times and considered evidence presented by officers of the Chief Executive's Department, the Department of Education and the Department of Finance. A number of organisations submitted written evidence and representatives of the group met with delegations from bodies such as trades unions.

"Adapting to Change" is the central piece of work which gave its name to the Council's attempt to tackle falling school rolls. It is important as a reflection of the thinking of a powerful group of

politicians and officials in Europe's largest education authority, and as a benchmark in the disputes which were to dominate Strathclyde education for a number of years. It is a liberal and a hopeful document which sought progress in a more open and participatory fashion than was usual in the Region. Its contents are discussed below.

(a) Proposals

"Adapting to Change" was published in November 1986. This 55 pages long Working Party report was specific in its recommendations on declining school rolls. The Working Party saw the exercise as being one of long term planning to provide a service of high quality capable of adapting to rapidly changing requirements. (paragraph. 1). The document stated,

"This working group's proposals rest upon educational principles and are designed .... to be responsive to local circumstances. We believe that they deserve the most urgent and serious consideration of the Council and the people of Strathclyde."

Three main principles which impact on subsequent events underpin the report. The first was the premise that the proposals were based on educational rather than financial considerations reflecting Labour Party thinking nationally and locally. This became crucial in the ensuing debate and opposition groups seized on it as an Achilles' heel for the Regional Council in subsequent campaigns. It was later acknowledged privately, within the Directorate, that not to have include the saving of money as a main criterion was a mistake.[6] A second principle was, "... to provide for those who experience learning difficulties"(para. 2.1) This reflected existing Regional policy on the provision for the less able. The third principle was the Region's commitment to tackling social

deprivation through the provision of extra resources for schools in deprived areas. This often emerged in debates over proposals concerning schools in more affluent areas as the Council favoured a strategy of positive discrimination which some middle class parents considered to discriminate against them. While the educational considerations were to be the prime motivating factor financial arguments were not wholly absent. The report stated that,

"...., the present pattern of organisation of the education service in Strathclyde may be seen as devoting an excessively high proportion of the budget to the maintenance of under-utilised schools" (para. 3.4)

Important in later debate was the issue of secondary school size, much discussed by the Working Group. Their position was that,

"...the group is drawn to the view that in the secondary sector, as a rule, the preferred level of rolls should lie in the 800 to 1,000 range; however it is recognised that acceptable curriculum balance and pupil choice may be maintained with rolls as low as 500." (para. 4.3).

They suggested that all savings be directed towards education (para. 4.10) and further that primary/ secondary mergers were an option (para. 5.22). They proposed that the Director of Education could investigate post-16 provision (para. 5.2.4). Thus a willingness was flagged to consider non-traditional forms of provision which had not been reflected in the Region's educational provision before 1986. On the contrary Strathclyde had attempted to create a uniform system as underlined in its provision of six year comprehensive schools on the sparsely populated islands of Islay and Mull. The belief that variety of provision led to or supported inequality, was ingrained in the Strathclyde establishment as a counterpoint to Conservative faith in variety and consumer choice.

Looking outside the Region, paragraph 5.3 "Mechanisms of Change" began with the statement that,

"Experience in other parts of the country has demonstrated that there are no hard and fast criteria which can be used to rationalise education provision." (para. 5.3.1)

Experiences such as those of Borders Regional Council, in a pilot study commissioned by the Accounts Commission, are mentioned but dismissed as simplistic. No reference is made to the SED and there is no evidence of central government advice to the Working Party or the Council on this nationally important issue. The report rejected the usual method of dealing with individual schools by a 'single-aim-shot' approach which identifies a particular institution as under threat in isolation from the broader picture. It asserts strongly that the full benefits of reducing overcapacity would only be achieved if a 'ring fence' is drawn around savings and these put back into education.

This section is important in making the case for participation of the local community in decision making. However, it restated the Council's ultimate decision making power. Paragraph 5.3.4 sets out procedures for local consultation as follows;

a) It was proposed that the Council establish local groups which would review local school-based educational provision against clearly identified but widely based criteria and Regionally produced statistical information. Specialist advice was to be made available to the groups.

b) Membership of the groups was suggested i.e. councillors, headteachers, parent representatives, divisional education officers.

c) The remit was to be to review local educational provision with a view to bringing about an improvement but the Council would have the final say on the use of resources.
d) It suggested the establishment of a Regional Review Group which would put proposals to the Education Committee. The group structure was not specified.

Also included were a number of factors to be taken into account by local review groups. General factors were likely population trends over the next 10-15 years, the range and quality of the provision, the school as a community resource, and the cost of providing educational services. Specific factors were population projections, school capacities, the school as a community resource, and lastly financial considerations. Also included was the quality of educational provision as reflected by courses offered, the range of teaching staff, the range of resources, the appropriateness of the learning environment, and appropriate ancillary help. (para. 5.3.4). The report concluded by stating,

"The review procedure suggested here is not a simple one. Indeed it is highly likely that the procedure suggested would need refinement before it could be used. The main features remain attractive nonetheless: the procedure involves local assessment using clear Regional guidelines and information, the assessment being based on a wide range of important factors, statistical, demographic, financial, educational and social." (para. 5.5)

It was clear from the report that the authors felt a thorough review was needed. (paras. 6.1 and 6.2). The need for local review groups was restated and the recommendation was made that savings should be kept within the education service. The only note of dissent was made by the Conservative member on this last point.

(b) Development of Detail

Most of the proposals in "Adapting to Change" were accepted by Strathclyde. At this point the Region, according to one councillor, made a major error. (see chapter 6). In his opinion "Adapting to Change" was a liberal document, in its devolution of power and influence. In his view the West of Scotland was not used to this approach and the Labour Party should have rejected it. This retrospective view makes sense in the light of the Labour defeat in the 1987 general election but early in that year the Party was in a far more optimistic frame of mind. It therefore developed the Working Group's ideas.

Regional guidelines[7] prepared for area review groups added detail which translated the broad aims of "Adapting to Change" into a plan of action. Expansion was made on what could be taken into account by area review groups. It was noted that population and roll projections coming from the Education and Chief Executive's department were static and did not account for population movements. Roll projections were to be refined by divisional education officers to take account of new housing and migration. Information was given on calculation of capacities which would later be useful to campaign groups.

Other general policy objectives of the Council were restated. The Council was anxious that developments always deferred to positive discrimination policies. Also noted were specific policy objectives which imposed boundaries on possible recommendations. Primary sector objectives were an emphasis on basic skills, teaching in permanent accommodation and positive discrimination. Secondary sector objectives

were the centrality of comprehensive provision, positive discrimination and integration of children with special needs.

Measures of quality of educational provision were suggested. In primary schools curricular balance and the provision of specialist tuition were indicators. Evidence of a smooth transition between primary and secondary school was to be sought. In the first and second years of secondary equality of access (particularly on gender grounds) and lack of fragmentation of courses was to be used. In the third and fourth years of secondary equality of access, short course provision and provision of vocational courses for the non-academic were commended. In the fifth and sixth years review groups were to look for a wide range of traditional subjects, non-advanced modules, good guidance and counselling and good links between school and Further Education.

Review groups were also asked to look at the range of resources in schools and at the condition and suitability of buildings. Community use and parental involvement were to be gauged and groups were advised to assess the social importance of the school to the community and to consider the effect of the school on population drift. Under the heading 'Financial Considerations' account was to be taken of running costs and maintenance and possible realisation of assets.

(c) Summary

The proposals made in "Adapting to Change" sought to involve a wider range of input in a less confrontational manner than had previously been the case in Strathclyde. The Council had experience in areas such as Paisley and Irvine where closure threats had led to

widespread public protest and attacks on Strathclyde. The report implies that if interested parties were to look in a rational and consistent way at the issues then common sense would prevail and agreed solutions would emerge. This reflected the authors' political philosophies combined with a reaction to previous experiences of school closure. The mood of the report was less centrally controlling than that associated with the 'old guard' of the Regional Labour Party. It reflected a drift from paternalism as Strathclyde gained more confidence and experience as a Council. There was a growing awareness that a better educated population facing more and more complex problems needed to be involved in decision making. This involvement extended the democratic process and was likely to lead to more sensible proposals. However, in an era of contraction, consultation also offered the opportunity to spread the blame if things went wrong. The Working Party attempted to portray their proposals in a positive light studiously avoiding the impression of being about 'cuts' or school closures. This was shown by the low priority given to financial considerations and anticipates the hostility with which the electorate and the party would view a report which was directed at closing schools solely to save money.

Overall the report shows a concern for educational issues, an attention to detail and a willingness to involve a range of contributions which was admirable. Many aspects of the report which can be criticised in retrospect, such as the assumption that the public would take a logical, Region-wide view of education and that area review groups would provide an even pattern of investigation into the issues. However, at the time the report was widely accepted, as indicated by the councillors' evidence in chapter 6.

The issues raised reappear below but three particular questions arise from the document itself. Firstly, it is surprising how little use is made of experience outside Strathclyde. In 1986 a number of English authorities, such as Manchester and Plymouth attempted large scale rationalisation which would have offered valuable lessons to Strathclyde.[8] The only evidence of substantial consultation of outside sources in Adapting to Change uncovered by this research was made in attempts to counter arguments from a pressure group which took issue with the Region using UK wide examples and references from academic literature. A second important omission was the lack of involvement of the Scottish Office who remained remarkably distant. This echoes the observations of Adler and Bondi who note that even before the passage of the 1981 Education (Scotland) Act, the SED had taken a less interventionist approach to the problem of falling school rolls than the DES. The SED did not issue any circulars analogous to circulars 5/77 or 2/81 which had exhorted English local authorities to reduce surplus places.[9]

The amount of information given and the listing of criteria for assessment, methods of calculation of school rolls and capacities plus the mass of other detail ensured three results. Firstly, the process would have a degree of openness as data given to review groups would be widely available. As a result the public would be armed with a wealth of information. Secondly, the requirement for detail ensured that the Directorate was central to the process. Decisions made after the publication of "Adapting to Change" made greater input from the Directorate inevitable. The collection, analysis and interpretation of information suggested by the changes could only realistically be carried out by full-time professionals. A further consequence was that given the

timetable agreed the depth of review suggested was to prove to be impossible.

More importantly "Adapting to Change" emphasised inputs into schools and pupils rather than process and outcomes. Some factors which were not referred to in the documents mentioned were exam results, links with higher education, tradition or ethos of a school or its popularity with parents. Papers mentioned quality of provision but Strathclyde was at pains to keep definitions of quality distinct from those popular with Scottish Office politicians, i.e. those which centred around parental choice, exam results and discipline. There was mention of the range of staff but none of quality. In the actual battle over closures, it was the factors ignored by the Region which were most often used by campaign groups. Technical factors such as school capacity, roll projections, and curricular balance were contested but it became clear that issues concerning ethos and the exchange value of education were nearer to parents' hearts. The use of such arguments will be discussed below.

The administration adopted a Liberal approach (emphasising consultation and decentralisation of power as espoused by the Liberal Party) to a difficult problem in a Region which was not used to devolved power. However the extent of decentralisation was not great. The area review groups were drawn from a very narrow range of people and further, the politicians did not lose any decision making powers within the process. However, if Adapting to Change did not redistribute power and influence it did provide an unusual wealth of information. The narrowness of the power base and the wide availability of information are important in the discussion of the whole of Adapting to Change and

will be returned to below.

4.3 From Discussion to Action

"Adapting to Change" was published in November 1986 and was discussed at various levels within the Labour Party and Region in the first half of 1987. On the 28 May 1987 the powerful Policy and Resources Committee commended "Adapting to Change" with two riders. Firstly 'ring fencing' was to be applied only to at least 50% of any savings. This decision was fundamental. "Adapting to Change" argued for change on educational grounds but reduction of 'ring fencing' reduced the integrity of the exercise. Councillors were left to argue that the underlying purpose was to improve education but the fear of cost-cutting was now introduced. Secondly it was decided that the Regional Review Group should be drawn from membership of the full Regional Council thus giving the councillors the final say on any proposals.This make-up was understandable in political terms, but a case could have been made (though such an argument did not emerge) that if the input of 'outsiders' was valuable when looking at a particular area then it would be valuable at Regional level.

At this time the tasks of area review groups were set out as being to conduct the review in terms of existing policies of the Region, to consult with interested parties, to make recommendations and to submit these to the Regional Review Group. [10] It was stated that there was unlikely to be a single pattern or size of group and it was suggested that there be a core membership with additional representation reflecting the nature of the issues to be tackled: a strange remit when the group itself was to identify these. Membership was to be between nine and sixteen or larger in

unspecified exceptional cases. Where desirable (again unspecified) more parents or headteachers or others could be enlisted.

The Regional Review Group was to consider the structure of local review groups, to appoint a councillor to chair each group, to monitor area groups' progress, to approve or reject recommendations of groups and to approve local review group reports to the Regional Review Group. The Regional Review Group comprised twelve Labour and three minority party members when it first met on 15 July 1987. Two of the original Working Party were on the group as was the chairman and vice chairman of the full Education Committee, reflecting the importance of the issue.

The formation of thirty three 'Areas' was made by the Regional Review Group at its first meeting. They were broadly similar in size but some were large such as Glasgow North West , covering thirteen secondary schools and some were small areas such as Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock with only three secondary schools. Twenty six area review groups were given priority and were to be dealt with in the first year. Phase one was to be a massive exercise which covered the larger part of the Region tackling a great many significant problems. The area review groups were chaired by councillors from out-with the locality under review in order to promote an impartial approach.

In practice each area review group was made up as follows; a chair, one primary and one secondary parent representative, one teacher, one member of non teaching staff (later withdrawn on union advice), one primary and one secondary headteacher, a representative of the

Directorate and all local councillors. This led to there being five local councillors (including chair) in typical groups such as Hamilton and Paisley and ten councillors in larger areas such as Glasgow North West .[11] Adapting to Change added an informal, but highly structured stage in addition to statutory requirements.[12] This greatly lengthened the process of closure of any school and provided parents' groups with many more opportunities to put cases to the Council, central government and the media.

The stage was set for a comprehensive review. The architects of the plan had designed a system which offered the opportunity for formalised non-Council input which resembled local pluralism but, which in fact became limited incorporation of individuals in order to legitimise the process. The limited nature of this local pluralism was underlined by the composition of the Regional Review Group which had the power to overturn all local decisions. There were a large set of guidelines, which for the number of establishments involved would prove impossible to apply, leading to groups being forced to be selective in their choice of criteria used and sectors to be looked at. Following almost inevitably from this would be a lack of consistency of approach across the Region which was to be easily challenged by those opposed to proposals.

It is worth restating some of the major factors which were in place in the spring of 1987 before work started at the local level. Firstly, the agenda was set by the Council with the tacit agreement of central government (see councillors contributions, chapter 6). Regional policies, such as commitment to comprehensive education and positive discrimination, constrained the options though some new departures were suggested.

The area groups were councillor/ Council employee dominated and ultimate decision making power was firmly held by the centre. Suggested criteria to be used by groups were mechanistic and steered clear of the Conservative promoted measures of quality in schooling. Some of the Tory-favoured criteria were of great importance to parents and would inevitably surface in debate. Lastly while the Council retained power within the process it loosened its grip on information. All of the above were to prove significant.

Section 2

4.4 The Local Level: Paisley

The next stage in the process was played out at a local level. In this section Adapting to Change in Paisley will be considered. Paisley is interesting in a number of ways. The review process was typical of that gone through by other area review groups and the actions of councillors, officials and parents were similar to other areas of Strathclyde. However, Paisley had some unusual aspects. In particular central government became involved and demonstrated the poor quality of central/ local relations. The town was also seen by participants as an educational 'whole' and this usefully demonstrates the conflict between school concerns and wider concerns. It also demonstrates the varying effectiveness of different forms of campaign.

Paisley which lies to the south-west of Glasgow was the county town of Renfrewshire until local government reorganisation in 1975[13] with an estimated population of 85,000.[14] It was the the administrative centre of Renfrew Division. The town had long history and a clear notion of its identity, particularly in relation to Glasgow, its much larger and more

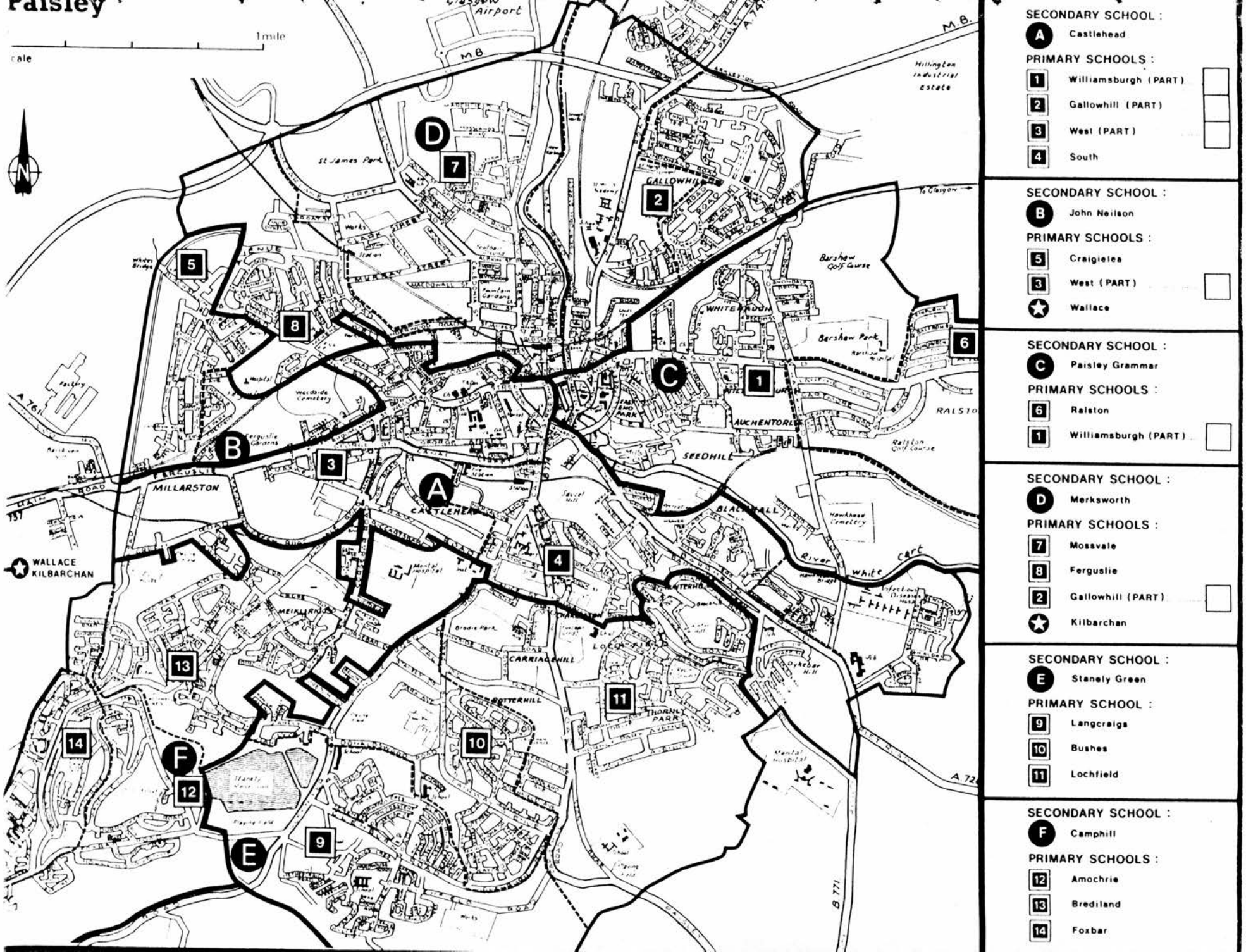

Figure 4.1 Strathclyde Primary and Secondary Schools in Paisley 1987
(Source: Strathclyde Regional Council)

powerful neighbour. It had remained an industrial centre into the twentieth century but suffered the same decline in manufacturing industry and rise in unemployment common to the west of Scotland from the 1960's onwards. As well as being a distinct community with a strongly developed local identity, Paisley was one of only two Scottish towns which had its own evening newspaper, the *Paisley Daily Express* (circulation 9,000).[15] This meant that there was a local vehicle for protest and criticism which proved important in debate.

Within Paisley in the 1980's Strathclyde provided nine secondary schools, twenty four primary schools and a variety of other pre-school, further and community education establishments (see figure 4.1). There were no private schools within Paisley. The secondary schools, with the Region's roll projections and dates of construction are given in table 4.1

Table 4.1 Paisley Schools 1986 [16]

		Roll projections				
	Capacity	**1986**	**1990**	**1996**	**2000**	**Date of Building**
non-denominational Schools						
Camphill High	1455	778	756	747	711	1967/71
Castlehead High	1247	1172	739	680	664	1971
John Neilson High	1061	273	376	399	377	1968
Merksworth High	1187	430	411	510	481	1972
Paisley Grammar	969	974	633	509	481	1889/1960/72
Stanely Green	1114	720	562	634	601	1959/72
Total	7033	4347	3477	3479	3315	
Roman Catholic Schools						
Sacred Heart High	1140	597	470	562	539	1971
St. Aelred's High	473	416	472	611	581	1965
St. Mirin's/ Margaret's	577	416	303	412	392	1964/74
Total	2190	1429	1245	1585	1512	

The schools varied from the 400 year old previously selective Paisley Grammar set in the centre of town to the modern Merksworth High located on the multiply deprived Ferguslie Park housing estate. All were six-year comprehensives.

Central to the policy of Strathclyde Regional Council was support for deprived areas and thus the treatment of these under proposals for reorganisation was emphasised by the Council. Working from census data and using a battery of criteria the Region identified 'areas for priority treatment' (APT's) which benefited from the input of extra Council resources.[17] There was a particular reluctance to withdraw services from APT's of which Paisley contained three as listed below.

Table 4.2 Areas of Priority Treatment in Paisley in 1987, their Populations and the Secondary Schools Serving them [18]

Area	Population	ND School/s	RC School/s
Ferguslie Park	7,617	Merksworth John Neilson	St. Mirin's/Margaret's Sacred Heart
Foxbar (Rivers)	4,209	Camphill	St. Aelred's
Shortroods	1,351	Merksworth	St. Mirin/Margaret's

In terms of demography, the general decline in pupil numbers across the West of Scotland was reflected in Paisley. The actual and projected figures for secondary schools in the town calculated in 1987 are given in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Actual and Projected Numbers of Pupils by Sector for Paisley[19]

	Primary Pupils	Secondary Pupils	Total
1977	10,403	9,127	19,530
1987	6,166	5,349	12,055
1997	7,197	4,914	12,111

Thus the 1997 projections were 62% of the 1977 total overall and as low as 53% of the 1977 total in the secondary sector. This sharp decline had caused much debate in the late seventies and early eighties leading to a situation where arguments over rationalisation were well rehearsed and targets for closure were aware of their potential fate. Some schools, particularly John Neilson High, because of past threats, seemed to accept the inevitability of closure while others were armed and better ready to fight closures suggested in Adapting to Change because of earlier experiences.

4.5 The Adapting to Change Period

(a) Paisley

The long history of debate ensured that before "Adapting to Change" was published, preparations had already been made for a fresh examination of the situation in Paisley. In May 1986 a briefing paper prepared by the divisional education officer was issued to local councillors. Its stated aim was to give local information in anticipation of Regional initiatives. This was not done in other areas considered in this thesis.

Table 4.1 above shows the capacities, roll projections and dates of buildings presented to councillors in this document.[20] As can be seen from the table the town possessed a group of schools largely less than

twenty five years old. The roll figures show high occupancy of Castlehead and Paisley Grammar, a number of schools half to three quarters full and John Neilson and Merksworth with very low occupancies. The projections show the figures developing to the point where most of the schools in Paisley (apart from St. Aelred's with its very low capacity) would be around half full. What the figures do not anticipate is the impact of placing requests. This is understandable in a 1986 context when councillors were opposed to the placing request legislation and fully expected a victory in the 1987 General Election. In retrospect the projections bore little relation to the reality of the next few years for individual schools, largely due to placing requests. They did, however, prove accurate globally.

Councillors were reminded in the May 1986 briefing paper that the calculation of rate support grant is based on the number of pupils in the school system and not on the number of schools or the number of places in them. (paragraph 3.1) The document stated that,

"Preserving the status quo in school buildings when pupil numbers are falling results in spending a growing proportion of the education budget on property costs and less on teaching and learning. The trend is to increase the proportion of expenditure on heating, lighting, cleaning and maintenance and consequently to reduce the proportion of expenditure on providing teachers, books, materials and equipment." (paragraph 3.2)

It went on to detail financial and educational arguments against small schools but rehearsed no arguments in their favour. The suggestions for rationalisation will not be explored but they did contain much that had arisen before and which would reappear later. The town became used to phrases such as the four school option or the 4/2

solution. These will be used below. The five school option is a pattern of provision based on five non-denominational schools. The 4/2 solution refers to four non-denominational and two Roman Catholic schools.

(b) The Work of the Paisley Area Review Group.

When the major Regional initiative (Adapting to Change) came, events in Paisley followed the same timetable as in other areas. The period between the publication of "Adapting to Change" in November 1986 and August 1987 was used by the Council to approve and plan the detail of the path set out in the document. The Paisley Area Review Group met weekly from 1st September until 10th November 1987. It comprised a Lanarkshire councillor as Chairman, four local councillors, two primary and two secondary parents, two primary and two secondary headteachers, two secondary teachers representatives and an Education Officer as Clerk. It had taken the opportunity to enrol extra members as discussed above. No councillor had been involved in the "Adapting to Change" Working Group and only one was a member of the Regional Review Group. The councillors therefore lacked experience of educational planning. It did, however, contain the Chairman of the regional Finance Committee which may have promoted a desire for maximum savings. The experience of earlier rationalisation attempts led to the group following the pattern of previous Paisley reviews. The meetings of the group were minuted and open to the public and on several occasions more than 100 people attended. Twenty one consultation meetings were held in local schools, attended by more than 3000 parents in all. The group also met delegations from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Paisley and the Educational Institute of Scotland.

Central issues discussed included optimum school size and it was agreed that a five school pattern would not provide a solution in the non-denominational sector. The Directorate was asked to provide papers on four and three school systems. At subsequent meetings the feeling was expressed that to combat the 'distortion' of placing requests capacities should be kept as close to pupil numbers as possible. This reflected a view within the Labour Party that if schools were kept full then the impact of the parents charter on less popular schools would be diminished. A paper was requested on secondary provision based in Camphill, Castlehead and Merksworth buildings though two teacher members asked for their opposition to this to be noted. Interestingly this was to become the Region's preferred option and one which could be seen to be a tidy 'bureaucratic' solution details of which will be discussed below. At an early meeting [21] the Chairman stated that the Group could bid for more than 50 % of revenue savings. It is not clear why this arose but it seems that he had consulted senior colleagues on this important matter. The suggestion that more than 50% of savings could be allocated to education did not arise in other reviews considered in this thesis. Perhaps this was because other review groups did not ask.

At later meetings discussion ranged across the various options. In the non-denominational sector it was agreed to issue consultation papers based on three and four school options. The group ruled out, in common with most other areas, putting primary and secondary schools in the same building. In the Roman Catholic sector discussion centred around a one school option (Sacred Heart) and a two school option based on Sacred Heart and the buildings currently occupied by another non-denominational school. A day long meeting on 29th September agreed

on the consultation papers.

The progress between the 1st and 29th September can only be described as remarkable. In the space of five meetings this group were in the position to agree on consultative papers in both the Roman Catholic and non-denominational sectors. This was partly due to the preparation made in advance for the group by the Directorate and to the work done throughout the previous decade. It does, however, point to a lack of willingness to look out-with the ideas of the past or 'official prepared' solutions. Subsequent meetings fine-tuned the proposals. At the meeting held on 8th of November the chairman stated that, if two-school options were pursued in the Roman Catholic sector to include St. Aelred's or St. Mirin's and St. Margaret's, these schools would not be extended. This effectively limited the range of options open to the group. Roman Catholic provision would as a result either be housed on a single site or in one of the present schools and an existing non-denominational school building. The Council had decided that final area meetings should be held in private due to the large numbers attending and the controversial nature of discussion. Recommendations were to be made public immediately thereafter.

(c) Proposals and results

The final meeting from 19th - 21st November was held at the Seamill Teachers' Centre in Ayrshire. The agenda for this meeting gave room for wide discussion but detailed notes are not available. The best indications of the agreements reached are contained in the report to the Regional Review Group which is discussed below.[22]

The group's main proposals were concerned with the secondary sector. The figures used for capacities and projections are given below.

Table 4.4 Paisley Secondary School Capacities, Rolls and Roll Projections[23]

	Capacity	1987	1990	1997
Camphill High	1425	718	667	716
Castlehead High	1218	1155	878	731
John Neilson High	1061	252	293	363
Merksworth High	1187	348	342	436
Paisley Grammar	969	1027	791	604
Stanely Green High	1114	657	565	667
Total	6974	4157	3536	3517
Sacred Heart High	1140	548	455	560
St. Aelred's High	473	373	402	464
St. Mirin's/ Margaret's	577	361	305	373
Total	2190	1282	1162	1397

The document stated that capacity figures were generous and took into account changes to the curriculum following the Munn report.[24] The capacity calculation included only teaching spaces and assumed that around 70% of teaching space was in use at any one time. Assumptions were made that all children who entered new houses in the area would be new to Paisley and in some cases allowance had been made for migration. Projections given were maxima in order that all eventualities could be coped with. The report catalogues the disadvantages of the status quo in curricular and financial terms and listed reasons for and against the various options in both sectors.

The non-denominational options were;

Proposal 1 A four school system based on Camphill, Castlehead, Merksworth and Stanely Green;

Proposal 2 A three school option based on Camphill, Castlehead and

Merksworth;
Proposal 3 A four school option based on Camphill, Castlehead, Paisley Grammar and Stanely Green.

All three proposals meant that John Neilson High would close, therefore the kernel of the issue was which school or schools would go with John Neilson. Proposals 1 and 2 and entailed the closure of Paisley Grammar which would inevitably cause great controversy. However proposal 1 was the four school option with the greatest possible number of places and retained secondary provision in the less affluent areas. Proposal 2 which also threatened Paisley Grammar and the relatively popular Stanely Green would provide the highest occupancy in the future (around 90% occupancy based on the 1996 roll projections). This restricted placing requests and parental choice and so found favour with the Left. Proposal 3 retained a high number of places and avoided threatening Paisley Grammar. It did, however, affect two schools serving APT's.

Proposal 2 won the vote narrowly. The Council could not be seen to let the axe fall on the poorest areas. Two members dissented from the decision on the grounds that the consultation process had identified an overwhelming demand for a four school option. It is not surprising that neither of these was a councillor as parents and teachers had least to gain from a three school option.

In the Roman Catholic sector three proposals were made.
Proposal 1 was based on Sacred Heart and St. Aelred's,
Proposal 2 was based on Sacred Heart and a vacated Stanely Green

building.

Proposal 3 was based on Sacred Heart and St. Mirin's and St. Margaret's.

In the case of the Roman Catholic schools, geography was less of a factor as the three schools were equidistant from each other. Proposal 1 produced the highest occupancy rate but created two schools with very imbalanced rolls, proposal 2 gave the opportunity for schools of similar sizes but was of course dependent on the Region's ability to close Stanely Green. Proposal 3 had similar advantages and drawbacks to proposal 1 but gave lower occupancy rates (or more likelihood of choice) and had the advantage of retaining a school in the north of Paisley. In a vote proposal 1 won narrowly. Thus the review group recommended the 'tightest' two school option i.e. the one which left the fewest surplus places. The group did not have a one school option in their list of proposals.

The group requested that more than 50% of revenue savings be returned to the education budget and that the significant rationalisation which was being proposed in Paisley should be reflected in the return of savings to the town. It was felt that in the short term 100% of savings be returned and in the long term 80% of savings. Details of possible local initiatives were given and included such items as improved staff levels and enhanced library provision. How fanciful these were is not clear but as things developed issues of spending saved money were not to the forefront. There was no guarantee of any recommendations of the review group being accepted.

At the end of 1987 all areas submitted their recommendations to the

second meeting of the Regional Review Group. This meeting from 18-20 December was of great significance as it overturned many of the recommendations from areas. It was also considered by participants to be the low point of Adapting to Change. The work of the Regional Review Group will be considered in more detail in chapter 6. Here concentration will be on issues affecting Paisley.

As one of a series of controversial decisions the Regional Review Group accepted the Paisley non-denominational three school recommendation but rejected the two school Roman Catholic option. Instead they proposed that the Roman Catholic sector should be served by one school, Sacred Heart High. These decisions left three major controversies; firstly the proposal to close Paisley Grammar, secondly that to close Stanely Green and thirdly to house all Roman Catholic pupils in one building.

(d) Discussion

The above does not suggest that the devolution of power to area review groups significantly expanded democracy. The Paisley proposals were similar to those from previous consultations with little evidence of departure from established ideas. The Directorate used the same senior personnel in drafting papers and their contents were predictable. Paisley did have an over-capacity problem, in part due to past inaction. The Council dominated Area Review Group decided to reduce places substantially but even this was not enough for the Regional Review Group.

The evidence on use of power is not of plurality of influence but of

tokenism. The Directorate influenced the agenda and direction but councillors held the decision making power. Further, non-councillors on review groups were not nominated or mandated by unions or parents' groups and so acted in personal capacities with no power base. If they had represented groups then teachers and parents might have taken a more active role in defending schools. This lack of mandate consolidated the power of the politicians.

Media evidence points to mounting pressure on members of the Area Review Group from parents' pressure groups. The non-Council members were incorporated into a process which some later tried to distance themselves from. Up to this point power clearly lay with the Directorate in their agenda setting, and with the councillors. With no real opposition within the Council the only impetus for change and sources of power lay outside the Council.

4.6 Action and Reaction Outside the Council

The response from groups and individuals outside the Council to rationalisation plans was to varying degrees thorough, vigorous and imaginative. Tactics and arguments used varied across schools and at different stages of the process. The great length of campaigning time available must be emphasised. The issues were under consideration from September 1987 until June 1988. Major protests were made firstly during the consultation process of the Area Review Group, secondly after decisions had been reached by the Regional Review Group and thirdly in response to the formal consultation process relating to school closure and lastly attempts were made via the courts and central government to keep schools open after formal closure decisions had been made. In this

section the opposition to rationalisation plans will be examined and will focus in particular on the positions taken up, the use of the local political system, the use of the national political system and the use of the legal system.

In arguing to retain a school in the face of closure or merger certain points arose time and again across Strathclyde. These will not be repeated for individual schools except where used particularly forcefully or where they apply to a particular school more than to others. The repetition of claims does not make them invalid, and can give extra credence, in that the same experience is expected in most schools. In almost all cases the following points were raised.

The disruption to or abandonment of the work and ethos of the school was stressed. Safety factors and cost associated with increased travelling and bussing of pupils was noted. The loss to the community was also mentioned in terms of the use of the school by adults and community groups. Very often alluded to were the positive benefits of a small school in terms of the knowledge acquired of individual children and the pastoral care taken of them. The successes of the school in national examinations was highlighted (usually selectively) and the quality of the teaching and learning given prominence. Typically in Adapting to Change the leading role was taken by parents though staff were usually involved in campaign committees and headteachers often took on a public role in supporting the schools.

Of as much interest were arguments which were rarely used openly by campaign groups. There was an 'unwritten rule' that, in public,

schools could be defended but other schools could not be attacked. This led to objections on the grounds of safety and disruption as mentioned above but not on the grounds of disquiet about the quality of a school a child might be sent to or concern over the skill of its teachers or of its ethos. Avoided also in debate was criticism of other schools in terms of socioeconomic status though there was always an undercurrent of unease when any proposal was made which involved children from an middle/upper-working class area moving to a school in a deprived area. That these arguments were not often used is important and makes more notable the few occasions on which they were used. This points to a high degree of collective loyalty amongst parents and this attachment to the current system was highlighted by lack of support for options such as the pursuit of independent, 'opted out' or selective status.[25]

All schools held consultation meetings with the Area Review Group before the publication of its recommendations and the attendance and feelings expressed at these meetings mirrored the levels of concern, or fatalism, of parents. Camphill and Castlehead, which were not threatened at any point by anything more than enlargement, took a lower-key approach than other schools. At their consultation meetings with the Area Review Group (attended by 120 and 260 parents respectively) the main points pressed were that savings should go back into the education budget and that the timing of the change proposals was poor for primary/ secondary transfer. There was also concern about the prospective size of both schools and a call for a solution which would provide stability in the system. One statement from the Camphill consultation meeting which was noted was that,

"The Head Teacher informed the group that a delegation had been appointed. His impression of the feeling of the parents was that there is

merit in the three school option."[26]

This was somewhat of a departure from the 'unwritten rule' that parents and communities could not be seen to attack others schools. Support for a three school option meant the retention of Camphill and Castlehead but the demise of three other schools. A proposal which received considerable support was that the non-denominational/ Roman Catholic divide be abandoned. It was also questioned why it seemed that Merksworth should be retained within all options. This was in fact not the case but nonetheless it reflected a feeling that Merksworth was accorded some protected status. The questioning of the denominational/ non-denominational divide emerged periodically in Adapting to Change but while many within the Labour Party were opposed to segregated schooling few in powerful positions were willing to tackle the issue knowing firstly the strength of support for the Labour Party within the Roman Catholic community and the inevitable intense opposition from the Church to any proposals which threatened the the integrity of Catholic schools.

The schools in the most deprived areas felt contrasting levels of outside support. The John Neilson meeting attracted only 90 parents who felt that the uncertainty over the school's future had led to further placing requests to other schools and there seemed to be an acceptance of the spiral of decline. At the Merksworth meeting there was some movement from not commenting on other schools. It was considered that a four school option would not be viable as placing requests away from Merksworth would be made. Notes of the meeting show that a three school option was supported in terms of range of courses,

remaining buildings, finance and recognition of social strategy. In a four school option with John Neilson and one other school closed, Merksworth would be seen as the least attractive school and though not openly stated, it could have been envisaged that the other three schools could have been full and vibrant while Merksworth was left with a small and unmotivated group of children.

The strength of feeling at Paisley Grammar led to two meetings being held to accommodate parents with 750 in all attending. Records of the meeting show that the good academic record of the school was stressed, the fact that parents would not send their children to Merksworth and that schools such as Merksworth should be kept small to help deprived children. This contrasted with the feeling at Merksworth. Part of a possible future scenario could have seen Paisley Grammar benefited from having the brightest and most motivated children from the Merksworth (and other) catchment areas while Merksworth dealt with the most difficult and demotivated children. The pattern of a small school of low prestige being threatened with closure or amalgamation with a larger more prestigious school was a common one in Scotland and while it is not in the scope of this study to explore this issue in cases outside Adapting to Change it could have been argued (though it was not openly) that the plight of one school was advantageous to the other.[27]

The consultation meeting with Stanely Green parents and the Area Review Group was attended by 550 parents. At this meeting the good examination results achieved in the school were stressed as was the unpopularity of Merksworth. The defence of Stanely Green was one which was particularly vigorous. One of the leading campaigners was a

Professor of Sociology who was active both in the Stanely Green campaign and in wider groups which tried to oppose closure.[28] The Stanely Green Parents' Action Committee produced two closely argued papers during the campaign which attacked many of the Council's proposals.[29] In the first of these the parents suggested that the Area Review Group had gone against the wishes of the community, had been inconsistent and had adopted different criteria from area review groups outwith Paisley. The document argued for a four school provision and cited the unease in "Adapting to Change" over schools with rolls greater than 1,000 (the projected roll of an amalgamated Stanely Green/Camphill was 1,390). The paper argued that Stanely Green could provide full curricular coverage and was part of a consortium of schools which operated in Paisley south-west cooperating in less popular course provision. There was also concern over the fate of the 120 adults enrolled at Stanely Green and the lack of logic in 'social balance' arguments in the Area Review Group report. These and other arguments in the case of Stanely Green will be returned to below.

In the Roman Catholic sector meetings were less well attended but while 'standard' objections were made to the proposals there was less focus and acrimony in the debate. The meeting with St Aelred's attracted 250 parents. The feeling was that a single school for the Catholic community would be too large. Records note opposition to the use of the John Neilson building. At the meeting with St. Mirin's/St. Margaret's with 150 parents in attendance many of the objections raised by other schools were raised and stress was laid on the lack of choice in a single school option. The Roman Catholic community had an extra stage in proceedings in that the Hierarchy was a powerful influence and was

consulted formally and informally. There was a sense that proposals could be fought on an additional front and therefore were less of a threat in the early stages. The actions of the Church will be discussed below.

At the beginning of 1988 Adapting to Change was surrounded by controversy and was becoming increasingly complex. The educational and financial and statistical bases of the recommendations of the Area Review Group had been challenged by parents and there was a widespread concern over the accuracy of figures and equity of proposals. Part of this undermining of information was carried out by campaign groups (such as Paisley Grammar) who sought to maintain their school and who were fearful of closure or infiltration of pupils from less affluent areas. Other groups, such as Stanely Green were anxious simply to survive and to achieve this were willing to call into question many assumptions and figures of the Education Department. Yet another set of parents, such as those representing Merksworth, were confident of political support but feared the impact of Conservative policies on the future of their school. There was therefore great division within the ranks of parents but given the undoubted loyalty to particular schools, campaigns were conducted with considerable discipline in the lack of attack on other institutions.

If the credibility of the work of the Area Review Group was greatly undermined by local campaigns, it was demolished by the decisions of the Regional Review Group in its rejection of proposals from many area review groups. The path laid out in "Adapting to Change" was becoming increasingly rocky.

4.7 Government Intervention

Towards the end of the the work of the Area Review Group the Scottish Office Minister responsible for education (Michael Forsyth) began to take a very selective interest in Adapting to Change. In December 1987 he was reported as saying that it would be an act of vandalism for Strathclyde to close the 400 year old Paisley Grammar School. The minister visited the school, taking up what was described as a long standing invitation. He stated that he was impressed by the modern teaching and the school's academic results and that the school should be saved for Scotland as a whole. He said he had no powers to intervene but the school had his support. The Minister raised the fact that opting out legislation could soon be in place but the Rector of the school expressed the desire to remain within the state system.[30] At this time it was also reported that the school had the support of a former pupil who had gone on to become the editor of the *Sunday Times* (Andrew Neil).[31] This support was to prove very useful indeed.

In an increasingly heated political climate Paisley Grammar argued for its retention in a similar way to other schools. The school attracted Scottish and UK-wide newspaper coverage (including in the *Sunday Times*) due to the interest of national figures and because it was the most prestigious closure-threatened school. Where the Paisley Grammar campaign differed from others was in its use of channels outside the Labour Party. By late January it was reported that the Prime Minister was taking an interest in the plight of the school, having received a letter from the Rector and 1400 letters from supporters.[32] Such high level interest in a school closure case was unusual and it seemed that the influence of former pupil(s) and Scottish Office Minister(s) had been

brought to bear.

Light was shed on this intervention by press reports. These claimed that the editor of the *Sunday Times* was at the centre of the affair. A number of articles supporting the school had been written in the paper by ex-Tory MP (Gerry Malone) and journalist who was a personal friend of the editor. In an article in the *Paisley Daily Express* entitled "How I tapped Maggie" Neil explained how he entertained a senior adviser of the Prime Minister to lunch. The issue of the school was raised by the advisor and the editor phoned the Rector and suggested he write to the Prime Minister. When the Rector's letter arrived the next day the Prime Minister wrote to the Secretary of State for Scotland asking what he was going to do to save the school. The Secretary of State replied and told of the devolution of powers on school closure earlier in the decade. As a result of the discussion an appropriate order saving Paisley Grammar was placed before Parliament. The editor agreed that Edinburgh would not have acted unless prompted from London but he was reported as saying that did understand how anyone could be criticised for speaking up for their old school.[33] The circumstances surrounding this surprising intervention, in particular concerning the personalities involved, will be considered in chapter 6.

The intervention may or may not have been as described above but whatever the facts the Education (Publication and Consultation etc.) Amendment Regulations 1988[34] were made on 26 January, laid before Parliament on the 27 January and came into force on that day. Before 1980 the responsibility for school rationalisation lay with the Secretary of State for Scotland but it was then passed to the local authorities. Approval had

continued to be required in terms of 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 where significant additional travel was necessitated or where representation was made by the Hierarchy on proposals affecting Roman Catholic Schools. The January 1988 regulations inserted into the Principal Regulations which were the Education (Publication and Consultation Etc.)(Scotland) Regulations 1982(a) stated that,

"...proposals to discontinue any school or stage of school education in any school or to change the site of any school or to vary the delineated area of any school, where the number of pupils in attendance at any such school is greater than 80% of that school's pupil capacity .."

required the consent of the Secretary of State. Further the 80% could be calculated on the basis of,

"...the maximum number of pupils in attendance at the school in any one year in the period of 10 years preceding the proposal;"

It became known as the '80% rule' and it effectively ensured Paisley Grammar's survival and gave the government a say in the fate of twenty out of thirty five reorganisation plans in Adapting to Change.[35] There was some speculation that the Secretary of State was at odds with his Education Minister and the Prime Minister over the introduction of these regulations.[36] This may have been because the Parliamentary Under Secretary, who was politically closer to the Prime Minister, had used an unusual route in promoting legislation, or that the Secretary of State was unhappy to undermine Adapting to Change. The Conservative line was softened after the 80% rule when the chairman of the Scottish Conservatives (Lord Goold) praised Strathclyde for grasping the nettle of the issue of school closures, while condemning its decision on Paisley Grammar.[37] Whether this difference in tone was planned or reflected division amongst personalities will be considered in chapter 6.

Government intervention highlighted several issues. The government was willing to intervene in a particular case for specific reasons. This points to a centralist tendency in power leading to a reduction in local democracy and in the ability of an authority to carry out a comprehensive review of provision. Those who intervened could have had little knowledge of the issues involved. This increases the evidence of an arbitrary use of power. Moderate Conservative opinion was silently supportive of the Region (see chapter 6) but on the Right opportunities to embarrass Strathclyde and the Labour Party were too tempting to pass by and chances to support potential Conservative voters in a targeted way were too good to miss.

Further, it was clear that the intervention could not be seen in isolation in that Paisley Grammar's retention at all costs had knock-on effects for other schools in Paisley and throughout Scotland. Politicians, particularly in London, would have been unlikely to have understood the complex network of issues in Adapting to Change. Even if this was understood there would have been little sympathy for other schools. In the eyes of the Right, parents wanted Paisley Grammar; it should therefore be saved and the rest of the 'schools market' should be left to thrive or perish. Lastly, the traditions and ethos of a school clearly carry particular importance and highlight the loyalties of particular groups. At one end of the political spectrum many within the Labour Party supported the least popular schools in the most deprived areas and there was some evidence of levels of bias against schools in middle class areas with a traditional ethos. In the middle stood the parents, staff and pupils of 'ordinary' schools whose loyalty lay with the school while rejecting

options such as 'opting out' and strongly supporting the comprehensive system. These schools, such as Stanely Green, had champions on neither left or right and so had to fight on their own. Echoes of this situation were found in other areas will be seen in chapter 5.

Despite the government's intervention, the Region decided to press ahead with the decisions made by the Regional Review Group. This had two main results; it meant that the Region had to operate the formal process of closing Paisley Grammar in the knowledge that any decision would ultimately be referred to the Secretary of State for approval, an approval which would not be forthcoming. This meant that the Region had a chance to test the government by parliamentary and legal means. In Parliament the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments was asked to investigate a complaint that in the new 80% rule the Prime Minister had exceeded her powers. A Paisley Member of Parliament claimed this on two counts; firstly that the powers were retrospective and secondly that a general provision had been made when the intention was to intervene in one case.[38] The Region also asked for a judicial review of the 80% rule but all of these tactics were minor irritants to the Conservatives given their substantial parliamentary majority. The approach adopted by the Region had the effect of prolonging the agony for those involved in the schools and served to raise the hopes of those campaigning against change in other areas of the Region. The plight of individual pupils, staff and parents was obscured by political wrangling.

4.8 Formal Proposals

The consultation procedure adopted by Strathclyde in the Adapting to Change was one of its own making, but in order to close or amalgamate

schools the Region had to follow the formal procedures set out in the above mentioned Education (Publication and Consultation etc.)(Scotland) Regulations 1981. Under these regulations the Region was required to publish a consultation document which was distributed to parents and made available to interested parties. The consultation had to be carried out for each proposal individually and thus the effect of one proposal on another could not be taken into account in the statutory process. This was unlikely to have been planned in the drafting of the measure but it did militate against wide-scale review and supported a 'survival of the fittest' approach. In all but a few cases the statutory consultation served as an opportunity for a further round of acrimonious arguments from positions which had already been taken up. There was also the added factor of the 80% rule which gave the proceedings an air of unreality in some cases.

The decision to press ahead with Regional Review Group recommendations meant that the Council had to publish three Paisley consultation documents in January 1988 and defend the proposals in what was now becoming a national issue with particular attention being paid to Paisley.[39] In this section some attention will be given to these documents, in that they, and the responses to them, distil the arguments which had taken place throughout Adapting to Change.

Each document had a common introduction and this rehearsed the arguments concerning falling rolls, surplus places, financial inefficiency and the effect on the school curriculum. The reasons given in support of the three school pattern are given. It was claimed that it created three large schools which would be able to offer widest possible curricular

provision. In addition the proposal was in keeping with the Council's social strategy in that it provided social mix in all three schools and retained a secondary school in the north end of the town in which two of the three areas of priority treatment were located. Further it was claimed that the proposals offered good geographic spread of schools, reduction in surplus places, some opportunity for parental choice, stability and best use of good, modern accommodation. In fact the occupancy rates proposed left little room for parental choice. In its specific discussion of Paisley Grammar the school is described as being in 'fair condition' with a restricted site and having playing fields 1.5 miles away. Merksworth High on the other hand is reported as being in the opinion of the department of architecture and related services among the best in Strathclyde. The high quality sports and community facilities at Merksworth were highlighted as was the school's adaptation for use by handicapped young people. In the case of the other two documents the contrast drawn in quality between the buildings is not so great. As with other formal documents there was not a great deal of detail given. Apart from a complex set of roll projections the other main detail is the breakdown of potential long term annual savings. This is given in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Long Term Annual Savings Arising From Closure of Paisley Grammar[40]

Teaching Staff	£243,850
Non Teaching Staff	£122,960
Rates	£130,500
Property Costs	£37,270
Maintenance	£40,000
Admin. Costs	£3,020
Total	£577,600

No particular reasons were given for the closure of Paisley Grammar, John Neilson or Stanely Green individually with reference only being made to the Paisley schools as a whole. As the proposal was estimated to entail £28,000 in extra transport costs (for pupils who lived within walking distance of Paisley Grammar but would be entitled to be bussed free of charge to Merksworth) the annual net savings would be £549,600. The basis upon which these figures were calculated is not clear but the Region would only have saved on staff if redeployed teachers were used more efficiently. There would have been opportunities to employ a few less staff with less duplication of promoted posts but these savings amount to very little in the short-term because of the no redundancy and salary enhancement policies (to be discussed in chapter 6). Savings associated with buildings would only arise if use could be made of them by non-Regional users. No saving on rates would accrue until an alternative rate-paying user could be found and at least some maintenance and other property expenditure would be needed until the buildings were disposed of. As in other consultations the Council noted that it had no proposals for the use of the closed school buildings. In the other two cases, as in cases across the Region, the savings projected were similar. For instance those for the closure of John Neilson are given below.

Table 4.6 Long Term Annual Savings Arising From Closure of John Neilson High[41]

Teaching Staff	£ 224,650
Non Teaching Staff	£125,960
Rates	£196,230
Property Costs	£51,260
Maintenance	£85,000
Admin. Costs	£3,180
Total	£686,280

Additional transport costs of £1,500 had to be set against these savings leading to an eventual annual saving of £684,740. Given the small variation in savings (in relation to the education budget of Strathclyde Region) resulting from the closure of one school or another, and also the uncertainty of the amount of savings likely to be realised financial statistics did not figure largely in the debate.

Some form of simplification is essential in the the examination of the large amounts of protest material which was produced in Paisley around this time. The proposals came to be known as the 3/1 proposal (3 non-denominational schools, 1 Roman Catholic school) while the alternative proposed by many groups was the 4/2 option (4 non-denominational schools, 2 denominational schools). Paisley Grammar had essentially won its reprieve, but this was not yet confirmed, and still the parents had much to fear in terms of how closures might affect the school. Even so Paisley Grammar was able to move out of the spotlight. Though supporters of John Neilson still argued for their school being retained in a 4/2 option they had little support, and as from the beginning of the review the school was virtually certain to close. Merksworth parents alone supported the three school option in the non-denominational sector, fearing that a four school option could leave Merksworth as the small unpopular school. Castlehead and Camphill parents both supported the 4/2 solution, mainly due to fears of their schools becoming overfull. In a statement of opposition from one of these comparatively unaffected schools the following were raised as objections; the elimination of a non-denominational school in the east of the town, the creation of an unstable system, the principle of retention of Merksworth at all costs, the decision to ignore the effects of the 80% rule and the

discriminatory treatment of Paisley in comparison to the rest of Strathclyde.[42]

Important though the fears of the other schools were, attention now turned to Stanely Green. This school is interesting in the range of tactics used by its campaign group. It says much for the effectiveness of various types of intervention. The defence of the school developed in three main ways which were quite different from those which were used to save Paisley Grammar. The first of these was the use of detailed analysis of the Education Department documents, the second was the use of a joint approach within the Paisley Schools Action Group and the third was the use of the courts.

The Stanely Green campaign investigated the detail of the consultation, and other documents produced by the Region in a much closer way than other groups. It is not possible to examine all the strands explored in their documents but the nature of the criticism seems to have concerned the Directorate enough to send Regional researchers off to libraries to refute some of the arguments.[43] Further, the Directorate had thought it necessary in December 1987 to issue a point by point response to the Stanely Green submission to the Area Review Group. That document attacked both the process by which the Council approached the issue and the contents of consultation documents.[44] The parents held that the process through which the issues had been raised had alienated parents, and that as the support of parents was a crucial foundation of a good education system this lack of backing was a fundamental flaw. For the campaigners much of the alienation resulted from the fact that the wishes of the parents had been ignored in that according to the group

over 90% of parents wanted a four non-denominational/ two Roman Catholic School solution. On educational grounds it was argued that rather than educational issues being put to the fore in events,

".. attention has centred on costs, buildings and the minimum number of schools necessary to house the projected secondary population. Thus factors that seem to us to be central to a proper debate about education, such as the characteristics of individual schools, their social and community functions, their academic achievements, and the support of parents, appear to have been subordinated to other considerations."

As well as looking at the wider aspects of the consultation the Stanely Green group also paid attention to detail. While the financial projection aroused little debate the roll projections were questioned by campaign groups. The main thrust of complaint can be illustrated by table 4.7

Table 4.7 Paisley Secondary School Capacities, Rolls and Roll Projections [45]

	Roll 1987	Roll 1997 Area Review Group	Roll 1997 Consultative Document
Camphill High	718	716	619
Castlehead High	1155	731	604
John Neilson High	252	363	345
Merksworth High	348	436	435
Paisley Grammar	1027	604	505
Stanely Green High	657	667	555
Total	4157	3517	3,063
Sacred Heart High	548	560	500
St. Aelred's High	373	464	382
St. Mirin's/ Margaret's	361	373	317
Total	1282	1397	1,199
Grand Total	5,439	4,914	4,262

The accusation of campaign groups was that the Directorate had managed to 'lose' 652 pupils between the work of the Area Review Group

and the publication of the consultative document. This was further backed up by tables of building sites and quotation of figures from independent population analyses. These figures were used to embarrass the Region in the press.

The group alleged that the reduction of the Paisley schools from nine to four would leave all four of these schools with rolls in excess of 1,000 with two having rolls in excess of 1,300 which according to "Adapting to Change" should be avoided wherever possible. The group also commented that the implementation of the proposal would uproot 50% of pupils in Paisley. These arguments on lack of parental support, faults in figures and the effects on pupils were powerful ones but were made by supporters of a school which unlike Paisley Grammar or Merksworth had few supporters in powerful places. Powers within the Conservative Party and the Region were determined that neither of the above two schools would close.

The second tactic, the banding together of groups opposed to proposals, seems to have been a late initiative and one which Stanely Green campaigners had a particularly active part in. This confederated approach was one which was common in campaigns in the West of Scotland and there had been attempts to organise campaign groups across the Region in the face of Adapting to Change. The difficulty facing these groups was that the proposals often set the interests of one school against the other. For instance in the case of the Paisley Schools Action Group an argument for a 4/2 solution suited Stanely Green very well.This was because with John Neilson likely to close and the debate over Paisley Grammar and Merksworth likely to result in the closure of one of those

two schools (by March, most likely Merksworth) a 4/2 solution would favour Stanely Green. Thus in its submission to the formal consultation the group argued for a 4/2 solution, but had to note the dissent of Merksworth and John Neilson. Parents' fears had been raised in Castlehead and Camphill over potential overcrowding and some of the points raised by the Stanely Green parents reflect cases made by these schools. Overall the submissions to the Region of the Paisley Schools Action Group bear the hallmarks of the work done in support of Stanely Green. Though the importance of this combined action should not be over-emphasised it does appear that the Paisley group was instrumental in disseminating ideas used in support of Stanely Green. This is not to say that the Stanely Green campaigners were not genuine in their concern for education in Paisley as a whole but study of the issue as a whole suggests that their major loyalty was to Stanely Green.

The third tactic was the use of the courts which was set in train when after formal consultation, the Council decided to close Stanely Green. If legal action was successful Strathclyde would have faced two problems. Firstly it needed a building in its plans for the Roman Catholic sector. Secondly, judgments on Stanely Green could be used by other campaign groups to save schools. The case was therefore of crucial importance.

The Stanely Green legal action serves as an example of the use of the courts by other groups. In the course of the Adapting to Change various groups took legal action and many more threatened to. Stanely Green Parents' pursued the legal process further than any other group and reflected the frustration parents felt with the Region as well as an example of the increasing use of legislation by pressure groups. There

was also a faith that the legal system would somehow right perceived wrongs. However the most important reason was the feeling of protest groups that every avenue should be explored.

The common pattern of legal action was that a low income parent entitled to legal aid was selected to pursue a test case. In the Stanely Green case a petition for a Judicial Review was laid before the Court of Session on 31 May 1988.[46] Writing on Judicial Review, Bradley points to modifications in the mid eighties when a working party looked at decisions against which there was no appeal and against failure to perform a statutory duty.[47] He states that the reasons for an application for judicial review can be on grounds of a) illegality, b) irrationality and/or c) impropriety.[48] Bradley is of the opinion that in the late eighties an applicant for judicial review was more likely than not to be decided on the substantive merits of the application and was likely not to be dismissed on preliminary grounds.[49] This legal route was therefore one which could be used to challenge the actions of local authorities and it found favour with pressure groups on school closures.

In the case of Stanely Green the grounds were based on Section 28(1) of the 1980 Education (Scotland) Act. This section states that,

"In the exercise and performance of their powers and duties under this Act Education Authorities shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents."

Lack of regard to parental wishes was the first ground put forward. Secondly the appellant stated that incorrect material facts were used in

the closure process. The basis for this was largely as outlined above in relation to disputed roll projections. Thirdly the appellant felt that,

"No account was taken of the submissions made to the Respondents on behalf of Paisley Parents in general or Stanely Green parents in particular."

It was also stated that the closure timetable was unreasonable and decisions did not take into account material changes caused by the 80% rule. The judgment of 19 June 1988 was seen as surprising in supporting the Stanely Green case. The judgment was that Strathclyde had failed to take into account that pupils should be educated according to the wishes of their parents and that a decision should not have been pressed ahead with when the Secretary of State was still considering the fate of Paisley Grammar. This genuinely surprised education administrators throughout Scotland and pointed to a situation where any closure decision could be reversed if it went against the wishes of parents. It was also an embarrassment to the government who supported and had praised Strathclyde's general strategy. The Secretary of State was quoted as being prepared to introduce legislation to assist local authorities in closing schools if the appeal lodged by the Region against the judgment was not successful.[50] The government was back on Strathclyde's side.

It became apparent over the next few weeks that the Stanely Green judgment was seen as unwise by the legal establishment. In early July another judge disagreed with the decision in a case involving a Western Isles school.[51] Strathclyde appealed against the Stanely Green decision and the resulting judgment drew a distinction between the duty to have regard to the wishes of parents as to the education of their children and a duty to have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated

in accordance with the wishes of their parents. The appeal court supported the latter view and accepted the need to take into account other factors such as curricular needs and potential costs. The judgment states,

"In our opinion the Lord Ordinary's approach and conclusion over which he felt considerable hesitation is entirely wrong"[52]

By this time the merger of Stanely Green with Camphill had started but the parents pursued their case to the House of Lords. The judgment given on 29 June 1989 was in agreement with the appeal court opinion.

The legal path, which attracted schools both within and outwith Strathclyde, gained nothing material for campaigners and proved a distraction and a last resort. While costs were borne by legal aid, much time and effort was used up in a tactic which produced nothing more that the cachet of taking legal action and a large bill to the public purse.

4.9 The Council's Response and Results

In its response to the Paisley consultation procedures[53] the Council acknowledged the huge response, resulting in over 600 individual submissions and almost 14,000 views expressed when petitions and standard letters were taken into account. In these documents the Directorate took the opportunity to challenge some views expressed particularly those of the Stanely Green campaigners.

Criticism was made of the Council's proposals on several fronts most of which have been raised at some time in the preceding discussion. Parents' groups found the roll projections flawed and in particular the discrepancy between the Area Review Group and consultative document

figures was highlighted. The Council's response was that the former set of figures were generous and optimistic while the latter were more realistic and that the bases for these figures had been clearly stated in the appropriate documents. This highlighted the problems raised in chapter 2 over the usefulness and accuracy of local population projections. The public perception however would have been that the less generous set of figures were used to paint as bleak a picture as possible in order to promote maximum closures. Parents' groups were also critical of school capacity calculations, claiming that they failed to take into account the needs of a modern school. The Directorate responded by stating that the capacities had been agreed with head teachers in 1987. They stressed that capacity did not equal the number of places in a school and that a capacity figure made allowances for places to be unoccupied at certain times.

A second major complaint was that the proposals would lead to several schools having rolls over 1,000. The response was that several of the most popular schools in Strathclyde had rolls of up to and over 1,700.This unconvincing argument went against the recommendations of "Adapting to Change". A third major concern was that Paisley had been treated differently from other areas in Strathclyde. The Region did not address this except to state that the situation in Paisley was particularly acute and that there was a long history of consultation. The last major area of dissent was the mass of resentment over the fates of particular schools and the overall pattern. Here the Region pointed to a large amount of disagreement and reflected that though there was much support for a 4/2 option there was little agreement as to which schools should be sacrificed. It came as no surprise when the conclusion was reached that the proposals to close Paisley Grammar, John Neilson High

and Stanely Green should stand. These proposals were passed by the Regional Council and approved on 14 April 1988.

This meant different things for each of the schools threatened with closure. The proposal affecting Paisley Grammar had to be referred to the Secretary of State under the '80% rule and on 15th June 1988 the proposal was rejected. The Secretary of State stated that,

"I fully recognise the problem which education authorities face, of surplus capacity in schools, and I would encourage Strathclyde to tackle these problems vigorously, so as to release resources for more productive use within education. But it was a quite inappropriate response to seek to close schools like Paisley Grammar and Notre Dame, which are returning good value for money, are popular, full and by any measure successful."[54]

This result was as expected as was the closure of John Neilson High, even though this had to be referred to the Secretary of State because of its effect on Castlehead High which was covered by the 80% rule. Stanely Green High, which had been put forward as a possible site for a new Roman Catholic School did not have to be referred to the Secretary of State and so could be closed by the Region but this was held up by the use of the courts as noted above. Legal action failed and the school was closed in the summer of 1988. The wrangles above forced the Council to postpone decisions in the Roman Catholic sector until after the summer of 1988. Due to united requests from parents and the Church for a two school option the Council agreed to provision based on Sacred Heart and the John Neilson Building.

Thus, after a decade of argument two small Roman Catholic and one large non-denominational school was closed. Merksworth was funded

and promoted by the Region as a centre of technical excellence almost, it could be argued, to spite the government following the Paisley Grammar affair. Adapting to Change caused much upset and in the end achieved little but painful lessons on the conduct of local authority affairs.

4.10 Discussion

While the above will be used in analysis in chapters 6 and 7 after consideration of evidence from other areas it is worth highlighting some issues at this point. Every area in the review group process had unique features but an overall review of Adapting to Change shows that many which arose in Paisley were common across Strathclyde.

Several observations on the complexity of the issues, the power structure within Adapting to Change and the position of educational arguments seem pertinent. The complexity was due to several factors, some of Strathclyde's making, some not. The first was the technical complexity of the issue. Preceding sections point to the range of factors which had to be taken into account in Adapting to Change. Roll projections, calculations of school capacities, the financial implications of proposals and redrawing of catchment areas made issues difficult to grasp. These problems had been faced by local authorities previously, but the attempt to look at them across more than half of the Region in a tight timescale, stretched the capacity of officers to deliver information and of the public to understand it. An associated factor already mentioned was the access the public had to information; for instance openness on the criteria against which schools were to be judged left the Region in a vulnerable position. The further complication was the newness of the exercise. There was no Scottish experience of contraction of rolls on this

scale and the Region did not choose to look outside Scotland for authorities who faced similar problems. Strathclyde set up its own system which, while it inevitably drew on the wider experience of education and local government, was new in structure and direction. Lack of assistance from central government combined with selective intervention and legal proceedings added to the difficulties faced by the authority.

If the issues were complex, the location of power in the process was less so. In relation to Paisley an imbalanced triumvirate of power emerges involving central government, councillors and the Directorate. As the location of power is a central theme of the thesis it will be explored in greater detail in later chapters but for the present the roles of the triumvirate can be noted. Firstly it is apparent that given political will the government could intervene as it pleased in Scottish affairs of this kind with scant regard to any backlash. Electorally Scotland was a Tory 'desert' during the mid-eighties and so there were few ways pressure could be put on the Conservative Party. This was particularly so in Strathclyde, with only two Conservative Members of Parliament. For Labour councillors the two checks on their power, apart from the law, was the possible intervention of central government and the political pressure applied by the community. Unlike central government, the local Labour Party was extremely vulnerable to political pressure during Adapting to Change. The Directorate appeared to have less formal power but evidence from Paisley suggests that they had much influence in agenda setting and in steering the debate in particular directions. While they did not make crucial decisions they did influence the types of questions asked about schools, produced discussion papers which directed the work of review groups and controlled the crucial technical

information upon which decisions were based.

The consultation process as set up in the form of area review groups did not devolve power to local communities. There is also little evidence of devolution of influence. Councillors would have argued that they were the legitimately elected representatives of local people and so represented local interests. However, the area review groups process recognised the need for the involvement of other constituencies (teachers, parents etc.) but these groups' involvement was limited first of all by Council dominance on area review groups and secondly by the overturning of local decisions at Regional level. The sharing of information was the main manifestation of devolution of power.

There is much to be gained from consideration of the tactics used and the avenues followed by the various groups. For Paisley Grammar the bypassing both of the courts and Regional power structures and also attempts to use educational arguments proved very successful. This says much of sources of influence available to groups. For other groups such as Stanely Green, the use of educational arguments and legal processes proved unsuccessful. This indicates that connections were more important than a good case.

A last comment is on the position of 'educational' versus 'political' arguments. It is evident that the debate lacked educational absolutes. There is little evidence of the Directorate standing against the politicians on a point of educational principle. For instance, "Adapting to Change" suggested one size of secondary school (800-1,000) as ideal and the education service as a whole argued for this. However in Paisley, when it

became apparent that the Regionally preferred proposal would lead to much larger schools, the Directorate provided evidence that in fact many of Strathclyde's most successful schools had well over 1,000 pupils on their rolls. No evidence was found of any vigorous opposition on any point from the professional. Attempts were made to manage discussion of Adapting to Change in such a way that certain aspects of education such as school exam results, ethos and discipline were not part of the debate. In the event it proved impossible to exclude these issues. The whole issue of what constitutes an educational factor was very complex. Again this will be reconsidered in the light of evidence from other areas.

This chapter has described the process of Adapting to Change and has tried to reflect some of its complexity. The interdependence of schools has been apparent and the way in which various parties presented their case has been highlighted. Further central government and legal involvement has been considered as has the distribution of power to affect outcomes.

Stances taken reflect wider political opinions. These ranged from the judge in the Stanley Green case who put the wishes of the individual as paramount to the central government view that Paisley Grammar should be seen in isolation and should be saved to the Regional view that schools should be seen as part of a system. All the evidence shows that while some schools were happy to be saved individually there was almost universal commitment to the collective, comprehensive system. Ideological shifts which occurred in many parts of Britain in the individualistic eighties did not seem to have affected Strathclyde parents.

[1] Labour Manifesto (1986) for Strathclyde Regional Council Elections (Glasgow, Labour Party).

[2] See chapter 2 for details of the make-up of the Council and voting statistics.

[3] Examples are the closures of Adelphi and Riverside Secondary in Glasgow and the attempted reorganisation secondary education in Paisley and of Roman Catholic Secondary education in West Lothian.

[4] Adler and Bondi (1988)op. cit., p.15.

[5] See Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of the internal workings of the group.

[6] Report by an Education Officer to Depute Director of Education.

[7] Strathclyde Regional Council (8 May. 1987) *Adapting to Change: Report by Director of Education,* FP/AR.

[8] This was to change when the Region commissioned a report on the Education Department. See Institute of Local Government Studies (1989) Education in the Community (Birmingham, INLOGOV).

[9] Adler and Bondi (1988) op. cit., p. 59., and see Meredith, P. (1992) *Government, Schools and the Law,* (London, Routledge).

[10] Strathclyde Regional Council (5 Jun. 1987) *Adapting to Change: Report by Director of Education,* RCL/JW.

[11] The Regional Review Group was made up as follows;

Name	Party	Ward	Other Related Committees
Armstrong, Jean	Con	Carrick	Policy and Resources
Baillie, John	Lab.	Prestwick & Coylebank	
Barrie, Thomas	Lab.	Kilsyth and Condorrat	Education
Burns, James	Lab.	Fortissat	Education (vice chair), Policy and Resources
Fulton, David	Lab.	Stewarton & Irvine Valley	
Green, Malcom	Lab.	Partick, Anderston	Education (Chair), Policy and Resources
Greig, Robert	Lab.		
Mason, Christopher	SLD	Kelvindale, Kelvinside	Education, Policy and Resources, Study Group
McElhone, Helen	Lab.	Mosspark, Bellahouston	Education. Policy and Resources
McGuire, James	Lab.	Barrhead	Education
Smith, May	Lab.	Lanark and Lesmahagow	
Toppin, Neil (Chair)	Lab.	Glenwood/ Fernhill	Education, Study Group
Walsh, James	Ind.	Dunoon and East Cowel	Education
Wilson, Robert	Lab.	Larkhall and Stonehouse	

[12] Strathclyde Regional Council (23 Jul. 1987) *Adapting to Change: Report by Director of Education,* RCL/SS.

[13] Kellas, J. (1989) *The Scottish Political System*, 4th Edition, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), p. 163.

[14] Gasgoine, B. (1993) *Encyclopaedia of Britain,* (London, Macmillan), S.v.

[15] Scotland's four cities had their own evening newspapers which tended to cover city and surrounding area. The only other town with a daily newspaper at this time was Greenock. See *BRAD Advertising Media* August 1994 and earlier editions (London, McLean Hunter) for details.

[16] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Renfrew Division (May 1986) *Falling Rolls in Paisley Secondary Schools: A Brief for Elected Members Prepared by the Divisional Education Officer,* DD/ESG.

[17] Bryant, B. and Bryant R. (1982) *Change and Conflict: A Study of Community Work in Glasgow*, (Aberdeen,Aberdeen University Press).

[18] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Renfrew Division (Nov. 1987) *Paisley Area Review Group: Report for the Regional Review Group.*

[19] Ibid.

[20] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Renfrew Division (May 1986) op.cit.

[21] Meeting of 22 Sept. 1987.

[22] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Renfrew Division (Nov. 1987) op. cit.

[23] Ibid. As can be seen non-denominational schools capacities' differ from table 4.1.

[24] Scottish Education Department/ Consultative Committee of the Curriculum (1977) *The Structure of the Curriculum in the Third and Fourth Years of the Scottish Secondary School* (Munn Report), (Edinburgh, HMSO).

[25] Though in the Autumn of 1987 opting out of local authority control was not provided for by legislation it was under discussion and proposals had support from Scottish Office ministers.

[26] Notes of meeting at Camphill Secondary 19 October 1987.

[27] In Lothian in the early 90's pairings off this sort arose such as Royal High and Craigroyston, Portobello and Castlebrae, Broughton and Ainslie Park, Bathgate Academy and Blackburn Academy.

[28] Professor Dickson, at that time of Glasgow College of Technology.

[29] Stanely Green Parents' Action Committee (Dec. 1987) *Submission to Regional Review Group.* Stanely Green High School (Mar. 1988) *Submission to Divisional Education Officer in Reply to Consultative Documents on Schools Review in Paisley.*

[30] *Scotsman*, 4 December 1987.

[31] Ibid.

[32] *Scotsman*, 25 January 1988.

[33] *Scotsman*, 8 February 1988.

[34] Statutory Instrument No. 107 (S.11) Education, Scotland.

[35] *Scotsman*, 29 January 1988. At the time of the publication of the regulations there was some confusion over the 80% rule in that it was not clear for which year or years roll and capacity figures were to taken from. It was later clarified that the roll over the previous ten years was to be taken into account.

[36] Ibid.

[37] *Scotsman*, 2 February 1988

[38] *Scotsman*, 8 February 1988

[39] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of Paisley Grammar and its Amalgamation with Merksworth High School.* Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of John Neilson High School and its Amalgamation with Castlehead High School.* Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The proposed Closure of Stanely Green High School and its Amalgamation with Camphill High School.*

[40] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of Paisley Grammar and its Amalgamation with Merksworth High School.*

[41] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of John Neilson High School and its Amalgamation with Castlehead High School.*

[42] Castlehead High School Parents' Delegation (Mar. 1988) *Response to the Consultative Document.*

[43] Evidence from Paisley files.

[44] Stanely Green High School (Mar. 1988) *Submission to Divisional Education Officer in Reply to Consultative Documents on Schools Review in Paisley.*

[45] Based on Regional Figures in Area Review Group and Consultative documents.

[46] Petition of 31 May 1988.

[47] Bradley A.W. (1989) in University of Edinburgh, *The Scope of Judicial Review. Proceedings of Afternoon Seminar on Judicial Review; Monday 8th May 1989,* (Edinburgh, Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law).

[48] Himsworth C. (1989) 'The Grounds of Judicial Review', in University of Edinburgh(1989), op. cit.

[49] Ibid. p. 12.

[50] *Scotsman,* 21 June 1988.

[51] *Scotsman,* 8 July 1988.

[52] Harvey v. Strathclyde Regional Council SLT 612. See Meredith (1992) op. cit. pp. 141-3 for discussion.

[53] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Mar. 1988)*The Results of the Consultative Process on the Proposed Closure of Paisley Grammar and its Amalgamation with Merksworth High School,* DD/ESG. Similar documents for the other two proposals.

[54] *Glasgow Herald,* 16 June 1988.

Chapter 5 Adapting to Change and Glasgow North West, Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock and East Kilbride

5.1 Introduction

While some of the characteristics of Adapting to Change have been described in Chapter 4 it is important to extend the study in order to validate inferences made. In terms of the process of review and action Paisley was in some respects unique, for instance in the high level of publicity generated and in the interest of the Prime Minister. The strong sense of identity of the town also was unusual as was the long experience of debate over school closure. The study of Adapting to Change in North West Glasgow strengthens the analysis because it considers process in an area which was larger with a less well defined sense of identity, and which attracted less publicity. It was also an area in which some issues were tackled differently from the approaches taken by the Paisley and other area review groups. However, as mentioned in chapter 4, after a review of other areas it is clear that with the above exceptions, much of what happened in Paisley and Glasgow North West was typical of the rest of the Region.

This chapter will look at individual schools more closely than did chapter 4. Attention will been paid to the work of the Glasgow North West Area Review Group and the the fates of three particular schools within that area will be described. In addition, a brief review will be made of the process in Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock and East Kilbride, and an overview given of the results of Adapting to Change as a whole. This will considerably strengthen the study by providing evidence from across the Region and from reviews which proved different from the much-

publicised processes in Paisley and Glasgow North West. This will provide grounds for a broadening of the validity of the analysis.

The selection of schools for study provides examples of schools in decline, in areas of multiple deprivation, single sex schools and Roman Catholic schools. In Glasgow North West there was much less of a feeling that schools were part of a system and there was a 'blurring at the edges' (i.e.the area was part of the city and was affected by schools outside Glasgow North West as, for example, parental choice moved children across boundaries into other areas). However, it offers the opportunity to expand the story of Adapting to Change with attention being given to power and local communities. If the area review group system produced an expansion of partnership, then looking at Glasgow North West should show evidence of it. In addition the power of local government will be considered in the absence of great central government and media interest. In Glasgow North West, the interface between councillors and officials differed from Paisley and there had not been a long experience of fighting school closure battles. This leads to valuable information which sheds light on the balance of political and administrative power.

While many schools will be mentioned, several will feature in some detail. St Columba of Iona was a school which, similar to John Neilson High in Paisley, was seen as doomed from the outset. It did in fact close quietly. The story of its decline and non-controversial closure offers an interesting contrast to those schools which put up great fights. Possilpark Secondary will be looked at as it highlights the dilemmas which faced the Labour Party in its dealings with the most deprived areas in the Region. Notre Dame High School (and similarly Our Lady and St Francis

Secondary in Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock) was important because it raised the issues of single-sex schools and gave insight into the part played by the Roman Catholic Church in Adapting to Change.

It will be argued that the imbalanced triumvirate of power (central government, the Region and the directorate) still held sway but with some difference in balance of power from Paisley.

5.2 Glasgow North West

Glasgow North West Area Review Group was in effect the combination of two area review planning groups[1]. It was therefore much larger than other areas, presumably having been looked on as an inter-linked geographical whole. The geographical area was that bounded to the north by the Glasgow city boundary; to the east by the Springburn/ Townhead/ Dennistoun area; to the south by the river Clyde and to the west by Drumchapel. In terms of Strathclyde provision it contained thirteen secondary schools (eight non denominational and five Roman Catholic one of which was girls-only; see figure 5.1), fifty two primary schools (thirty two non denominational and twenty Roman Catholic) and a large number of pre school, special and further education establishments Also in Glasgow North West were a number of independent schools and Jordanhill College School, the only school at that time directly funded by the Scottish Office.[2] A more detailed consideration of relevant localities of the area is given in the discussion of individual schools below. Table 5.1 gives the Strathclyde Regional Council secondary schools in the Glasgow North West. The figures show the large degree of overcapacity in the area both in the non denominational and denominational sectors. Though non

Figure 5.1 Strathclyde Secondary Schools in Glasgow North West 1987

denominational figures showed promise of a modest increase, the rolls projected for 1997 were only 55% of capacity in the non-denominational sector and 48% in the Roman Catholic sector. Glasgow North West contained many distinct communities leading to a fragmentation of the work both of the review group and parents' groups.

Table 5.1 Strathclyde Secondary Schools in Glasgow North West 1987/8 [3]

	Capacity	Roll 87/88	Roll 97/98	Date of Building(s)
ND SCHOOLS				
Clevenden	785	573	497	1968
Hillhead	749	669	510	1931
Hyndland	846	628	742	1931
Knightswood	1,395	659	699	1958
North Kelvinside	1,721	619	767	1912/73/79
Possilpark	965	502	454	1964
Victoria Drive	1,569	571	594	1909
Woodside	1,152	489	756	1972
Total	9,182	4,710	5,019	
RC SCHOOLS				
St Augustine's	1,836	645	546	1954
St Columba of Iona	1,140	321	261	1910
Notre Dame	681	643	676	1939
St Thomas Aquinas	1,669	642	715	1957
John Paul	800	751	728	1982
Total	6,126	3,002	2,926	

According to one campaign group,

"The North West Review Group's unwieldy nature, by virtue of its large size, coupled with an unreasonable time-scale, makes it improbable that proper and considered consultations will take place..."[4]

It must be stressed that Glasgow North West was a geographical collection of neighbourhoods which had social, transport and

psychological links but within which allegiances were more likely to be to smaller communities or Glasgow as a whole rather than to "Glasgow North West".

5.3 The Area Review Group

(a) Introduction

The Area Review Group comprised a councillor from Ayrshire as chairman and nine local councillors (eight Labour and one Liberal). The councillors included the Chairman of the Education Committee and one of the members of the original "Adapting to Change" Working Group.[5] As indicated in chapter 4, representatives of staff and parents were members and in addition, in attendance without voting rights, were three Regional Council Advisers, a representative from the Community Education Service, the school council clerk, also a Regional employee and an education officer. In total, out of twenty two voting and non voting members only two were not Strathclyde employees or councillors. Further, the representative of non-teaching staff did not attend due to a trade union boycott. This imbalance, while a factor in all area review groups, was particularly strong in Glasgow North West. As well as the lack of outside voices it should be noted that the the core of officers from the Glasgow Division Headquarters shared offices with each other and with many advisers and education officers working with other review groups. Thus, there was a well informed group of officers with access to a wide range of information and advice. The flow of information was crucial and for most purposes the source of much of the information was Glasgow Division Headquarters. This led to a heavy reliance on the officers and placed many demands on them to produce statistics, information, discussion papers and options for the group. The area had

not had the same level of debate on the issues as had been experienced in Paisley and so public, councillors and officers were less well prepared and less entrenched in particular positions. Interestingly, Glasgow North West contained the only Parliamentary seat in the city which was not held by Labour at the beginning of Adapting to Change and so was politically less secure than other areas.[6]

It is impossible in this thesis to discuss all schools in Glasgow North West and so reference will be made to cases which are either typical or interesting. As in Paisley the schools varied enormously in character and in the backgrounds of their pupils. Schools such as Clevenden were situated in the relatively affluent West End area of the city while Possilpark High was located in an area of extreme deprivation. The area contained Notre Dame High, one of only three all girls schools run by the Region, and had the added complication of a much broader cultural mix in some parts with children coming from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and with some schools with a relatively high concentration of Muslim pupils. The pattern of provision in the secondary sector in Glasgow North West as considered by the area review is shown in table 5.2 below. The pattern was one of over-provision with a number of unpopular schools such as St Augustine's and North Kelvinside with projected rolls which were a fraction of their capacity (27% and 41% respectively). In the Roman Catholic sector the status of Notre Dame as a girls-only school affected the balance of the sexes at other schools, particularly at St Thomas Aquinas. The table shows the crucial effect of placing requests on the overall picture.

Table 5.2 North West Area Review Group; Capacities and Long Term Rolls with and without Placing Requests (PR) [7]

	Capacity	Roll 1987	Without PR 1997	With PR 1997
ND SCHOOLS				
Clevenden	785	592	554	650
Hillhead	749	663	618	650
Hyndland	846	603	659	760
Knightswood	1,150	656	478	550
North Kelvinside	1,721	617	874	700
Possilpark	965	478	393	333
Victoria Drive	1,569	558	615	500
Woodside	1,152	526	890	860
RC SCHOOLS				
St Augustine's	1,836	693	551	500
St Columba of Iona	1,140	332	580	280
Notre Dame	681	654	314	650
St Thomas Aquinas	1,669	648	766	650
John Paul	800	753	545	750

As in other urban areas travel was relatively easy and pupils could easily opt for a number of schools. While some schools were not at, or over capacity it must be noted that often in schools at this time there were year groups which were in effect full whereas there may have been space in other years. Typically in the most popular schools the first and second years were full, with places available in senior years.

(b) Area Review Group Process

At its first meeting on the 7 September 1987 the group decided that due to the large area covered and the number of establishments it would consider secondary provision first and would look at other sectors in the light of decisions reached. The decision to start with the secondary sector was seen as sensible in that secondary closures meant changes to arrangements in the destination of associated primary pupils. As a result

the most difficult issues were tackled first as closure of a secondary had always, in the past in all regions, created much greater controversy than a primary closure. Though the north west area review was serviced by more officials than other groups it was working towards the same deadline and so its size meant that proportionately less time could be given to a thorough review of all sectors.

Within the secondary sector the group agreed to first look at Roman Catholic provision. In the preparation for future meetings the officials identified the position of Notre Dame, the only single sex-school in the area, as a key area for debate; in terms of the events which followed, they were correct. This ability of officials to 'mark' particular schools was a great source of influence and while it may have been done with good intentions, and in full consultation with councillors, it displays agenda setting power. Some members noted that Notre Dame was a threat to other schools, in particular to St Columba of Iona and St Thomas Aquinas. One possible solution lay in a coeducational school being formed. Others felt that this would be difficult to justify and would overrule parental choice as Notre Dame was a very popular school. St Columba of Iona was also considered because, as stated in the minutes,

"The main problem affecting this school is the fact that the roll is falling and was projected to continue the downward trend and therefore, its continued existence as a school would be difficult to justify."

Options for the future of the school were considered but, while the status quo was left as a paper option, there was little doubt, even at this early stage that the school would probably close. In relation to Notre Dame, Clevenden, Hillhead and North Kelvinside the group accepted

that all of the schools were educationally viable institutions in which resources were fully utilised. For St Thomas Aquinas, Knightswood and Victoria Drive a range of options was put forward including the housing of Victoria Drive in its main building and using its Annex for St Thomas's and the inclusion of Knightswood primary in Knightswood Secondary. Again, this promotion of particular options early in the process showed the great influence of officials. Evidence in chapter 6 will show that the directorate would consult with senior councillors and that the axis of senior councillors and the Directorate was crucial at planning stages (this was more evident than in Paisley).

In the middle of the review process the group issued a discussion paper, published in the hope that it would inform the public and stimulate debate. This paper gives an idea of the thinking within Glasgow North West. It dealt generally with the issues but was specific in taking 600 as the lowest viable roll of an urban school and 400 as the number below which an urban school was not viable. This left the viability of schools with rolls between 400 and 600 open to question. This was more specific and less stringent than the advice given in "Adapting to Change" which suggested that a roll of between 800 and 1000 was optimum. It is interesting to reflect on the figures in table 5.2. Looking at projected rolls for 1997, with placing requests (the more likely scenario) it can be seen that out of the thirteen secondary schools reviewed only one would have had a roll of over 800 with seven projected to have a roll of between 600 and 800. This change of criteria made political sense in that it meant fewer north west schools would be threatened. It did nothing however for uniformity of approach in comparison with other area review groups. The group's minimum viable number of 400 threatened

only two schools, St Columba of Iona and Possilpark.

This discussion paper and other documentation showed that the Glasgow North West group was less tied to traditional ideas of sectoral provision than were their counterparts in other areas. For instance the discussion paper suggested three possible 'profiles' which could have used up surplus capacity in schools.[8] The first of these was the traditional pattern of school closures which would release buildings to the benefit of, for instance, pre-school provision. A second profile suggested the creation of an all-through school from primary one to secondary six. This profile would retain more secondary schools but would release primary school buildings for use by other sectors. It was noted that a viable number of secondary pupils would still be needed within the secondary part of a school. A third profile was one which would promote community schools which would make P1 to S6 provision but would also take in pre-five, special and community education. These forms of reorganisation were clearly sign-posted in "Adapting to Change" but were not incorporated in the proposals of other groups.[9] The reasons for this will be discussed below.

At the stage of the discussion document it was considered that the futures of St Columba of Iona and Possilpark Secondaries needed careful consideration and amalgamation with other schools was suggested. Further, Knightswood and Victoria Drive Secondaries could amalgamate in either building. The document blandly stated that particular attention should be given to Notre Dame. It was pointed out that £100,000 would soon be needed to be spent on the building to upgrade its fire precautions and that when the lease of the building expired, approximately £50,000

would be needed to renew it. Options of closure or relocation were put forward. The process of schools being marked as in danger had begun.

The detailed arguments over each school will not be dealt with at this stage. As with other areas, the review process became increasingly strained from meeting to meeting. Each Area Review Group meeting was open to the public and up to one hundred partisan observers were in attendance. Delegations from the group met with staff in each of the schools in the area and there was also a public meeting in each. The public meetings were usually well attended by, often hostile, parents. In correspondence to a colleague, one of the education officers described a visit to the public meeting at Knightswood Secondary School. Parents had arranged a protest meeting at 7.00 pm prior to the consultation meeting at 7.30 pm and so when the education officer and a councillor entered the crowd were already 'warmed up' and in the words of the education officer they "...appeared in the role of Christians thrown to the lions."[10]

After the public meetings and internal debates the final meeting of the group was held in private. At this meeting on Saturday 28 November the group decided on its recommendations to the Regional Review Group. Those relating to the secondary sector were as follows.

Possilpark Secondary was to be adapted to house primary 6 and primary 7 children from its associated primary schools. It was proposed that the primary school within the unit would be autonomous with a headteacher in charge (this unusual proposal will be considered below). Knightswood Primary School was to be accommodated in a wing of

Knightswood Secondary. A separate playground and entrance was to be made available to the primary school. It was recommended that Victoria Drive Secondary withdraw from its annex buildings and a feasibility study was suggested on moving St Thomas Aquinas to the annex. If the transfer was not feasible then some of the then current St Thomas Aquinas site was to be considered for alternative use or disposal. Notre Dame was to be retained with some alteration to its catchment area. Hillhead, Clevenden, Woodside, John Paul and Hyndland were all to be retained unchanged. St Augustine's and North Kelvinside were to be retained with studies to be carried out with a view to disposing of some of the school buildings. As anticipated St Columba of Iona was recommended for closure. The proposals were modest in terms of closures and cautious in suggesting studies on means of reducing the capacities of schools.

This review group which had throughout its area pupil numbers of 7,773 with a capacity of 15, 063 (51% occupancy) which would rise to 7,945 by 1997. The proposal to recommend the closure of one school with a capacity of 1,140 (7.6% reduction in capacity) plus some suggestions for other closure of parts of buildings and primary/ secondary site sharing was in stark contrast to the proposals of the Paisley Area Review Group. It was however claimed by the group that surplus capacity in the long term would fall by 4,080 places.[11]

In the Paisley area with a capacity of 9,164 and roll in 1987 of 5,439 (59% occupancy) the closure of five schools with a capacity of 4,194 (45.8% reduction in capacity) was proposed by the Paisley Area Review Group. There was clearly a lack of evenness in the procedure when such glaring

differences of approach are considered. One reason for the type of recommendations made, in particular the suggestion of primary/ secondary site sharing and the comparatively modest nature of the proposals relate to membership of the group. The north west group had as members the Chairman of the Education Committee (Dr Malcolm Green) and another senior councillor who had been a member of the original Adapting to Change Working Party (Dr Christopher Mason). The Working Party had suggested that area review groups should consider non-traditional forms of school organisation but this suggestion was not taken up by any other area. This was firstly because of a particular interest of members of the original Working Party who were motivated to put the "Adapting to Change" recommendations into action. Secondly, the presence of the Chairman of the Education Committee imparted more confidence in suggestions for non-traditional solutions. As well as this, the group set criteria in an astute way so as to threaten few schools. The proposals did cause controversy but not on the Paisley scale. At this stage the Glasgow North West group had played a cautious political game.

(c) Regional Review Group Response

As indicated in chapter 4 the political process gone through by the Regional Review Group will be considered and the opinions of some of those involved examined in chapter 6. In this section, concentration will be made on the proposals made by the group. As in a number of other areas the Regional Review Group accepted many of the proposals made by area groups but made some significant changes. The Group decided that the number of closures proposed by Glasgow North West was insufficient. Hence, as well as agreeing to the closure of St Columba of Iona they added closure proposals for Notre Dame, Victoria Drive and

Possilpark. The educational thinking of the north west group did not reduce capacity sufficiently. However, between the December meeting of the Regional Review Group and the January meeting of the Regional Labour Group, intense political pressure arising as a result of these decisions forced further changes of plan. Of the main Regional Review Group proposals, the decision to close Possilpark was reversed and Victoria Drive was also to escape with the closure of its annex. The proposals for the closure of Notre Dame and St Columba of Iona were to stand. Some of the less controversial recommendations made by the Area Review Group, such as that for the housing of Knightswood Primary in Knightswood Secondary were referred back to the Area Review Group and after a focussed and less heated set of discussions, were passed to the Education Committee where they were approved. For the schools concentrated on in this chapter the fates which followed the regional review differed dramatically.

The phase between the start of work of the Area Review Group and the report to the Regional Review Group proceeded in a similar way to that in Paisley. Communities tried to support and retain their school using varying tactics. The campaigns were fought with different degrees of sophistication and were targeted in different directions. As set out in chapter 4, in relation to Paisley, there was a standard (though perfectly valid) set of objections to proposals. The cases of three schools will be examined below. This is because they each had different characteristics, fought different campaigns and met different fates. The first, St Columba of Iona, was a very vulnerable school which closed with little opposition, the second Possilpark Secondary, also a vulnerable school, managed to preempt closure with a campaign centred around the deprivation of its

catchment area. The third, Notre Dame High not threatened by the Area Review group but was by the Regional Review Group, survived due to central government intervention.

5.4 St Columba of Iona

St Columba of Iona had the smallest roll and was therefore the most vulnerable secondary school in Glasgow North West. It was one of the few within the Adapting to Change review which did not put up a fight when threatened. It had been upgraded in the late 1960's from St Columba's Junior Secondary and, due to the existence of Notre Dame High and Garnethill Secondary (both of which were girls-only schools), its intake had never balanced in terms of sex. In 1982, John Paul Academy had opened and Garnethill closed. This new school was situated in a more affluent area of the city and proved attractive to parents. This resulted in the loss of the least deprived part of St Columba's catchment area and the transfer of the girls and staff from Garnethill to John Paul Academy.

Approximately 60% of St Columba's catchment area was classified as being in need of priority treatment and as with other similar schools many of the most able children opted to go elsewhere. As the roll declined, the school started to specialise in working with children with learning difficulties and developed a "Children in Stress" project. It also encouraged adult use of the school. Overall this pattern of specialisation was typical of schools with declining rolls. As the roll declined (usually in a deprived area), physical space and staff time became available and such schools were usually anxious to attract specialist projects which could lessen the impact of roll decline.

In November 1987, the acting headteacher published a document which reviewed the history and strengths of the school. It painted a picture of an institution which had addressed the needs of its pupils, two thirds of whom came from APT's. A programme of staff development and in-service training had been initiated and it had become school policy to move towards a system of mixed ability teaching from first to fourth years. The school had begun to branch into specialisation in enrolling adults, catering for children who had difficulties in coping with school, housing a visual arts centre and the Glasgow Schools Youth Theatre. The acting headteacher argued that the school should be retained with some of its space being given to a series of innovations in the visual arts and drama and with an expanded capability in accepting pupils with mild mental and physical handicaps. He stated following the area review,

" Given the demographic forces at work I myself can see no prospect of a future for the school other than as a centre of innovation making specialist provision..." [12]

In the area consultation process only one letter of protest was received asking for the retention of the school and that letter made the request in order that children already in the school could finish their education there. All parties accepted the closure and later in the 1987/88 school session the acting headteacher wrote to Glasgow Division headquarters stating that the loss of pupils due to 'planning blight' was so great that any argument to keep the school open was almost defeated. This experience was similar to that of John Neilson High in Paisley which was seen as 'doomed' and which therefore lost pupils and potential pupils as a result and so continued in a spiral of decline. Lying

close to the city centre, St Columba suffered from the lack of an identifiable community, from its previous unpopularity and from the existence of viable and attractive alternative schools in the north of Glasgow. It also did not enjoy the strong support given by the Labour Party to threatened schools, such as Possilpark Secondary and Merksworth High in geographically coherent deprived areas.

With area and Regional Review Group support, the formal process for the closure of St Columba of Iona was set in train. In January 1988 the statutory consultation document issued by the Region stated,

"Taking account of educational, social and financial factors, it is proposed that St Columba of Iona Secondary School should be closed and the pupils be transferred to John Paul Academy, St Augustine's and St Thomas Aquinas Secondary Schools according to addresses."[13]

This took into account the proposed closure of Notre Dame but ignored one of the only objections made to the proposals for St Columba of Iona. This objection concerned feeling against the transfer of some of the catchment area to St Augustine's, a school which was viewed very unfavourably by some parents, according to unpublished letters received by the Directorate.

The document considered that though there would be a small amount of housing development in the area this would not significantly affect the school and in any case this had been reflected in the roll projections. Further, the Region felt that neighbouring schools could accommodate the pupils without difficulty. The financial consequences of the closure were affected by various factors. The cost of bussing pupils who lived more than two miles from their proposed new schools was

estimated to be £32,000 per annum. Savings arising from the closure were broken down as in table 5.2 below.

Table 5.3 Revenue Savings arising from the Proposed Closure of St Columba of Iona [14]

Teachers' Salaries	£650,000
Other Staff Costs	£160,790
Rates	£139,630
Property Costs	£49,000
Maintenance	£27,200
Admin. Costs	£7,780
Total	£1,034,200

Thus the Region calculated that a saving of £1,002,200 could be made by the closure of the school. The comments made in chapter 4 on the calculation of these savings apply in this instance. The proposal, along with the effect of closing Notre Dame would leave the rolls of the other Roman Catholic schools in the area as shown in table 5.4

Table 5.4 Projected rolls 1990. Glasgow North West Roman Catholic Schools Following Closure of St Columba of Iona and Notre Dame[15]

	Capacity	1990 Roll (status quo)	1990 Roll (with closures)
John Paul	800	649	750
St Augustine's	1,836	567	744
Closure of St Columba only			
St Thomas Aquinas	1,669	594	678
Closure of St Columba and Notre Dame			
St Thomas Aquinas	1,669	594	1,221

Thus occupancy rates could be raised either considerably by the closure of both schools or marginally by the closure of St Columba alone.

It is clear from the figures that the key closure would be that of Notre Dame. St Columba of Iona did eventually close almost unopposed, except, surprisingly, for the objection of the Roman Catholic Church which in the debate over Notre Dame raised the idea of two Catholic schools for north west Glasgow based in St Thomas Aquinas and St Columba of Iona. This intervention was much more to do with Notre Dame than with St Columba's and will be considered below.

St Columba of Iona was an example of a school destined to become a demographic casualty. When threatened with closure, a school needed enthusiastic support from politicians, the church and/or parents. There was a relation between the three groups. Active parents groups could press politicians and the Church, and the Church could motivate the other two to defend a school. In this case there was no impetus to retain the school and its end was the result of consensus politics.

5.5 Possilpark Secondary School

The campaign against any threat to Possilpark did not have access to nationally powerful allies as was the case with Paisley Grammar, nor did it use the legal system as did Stanely Green but it was successful in that it was able to play on the commitment of the Labour Group to APT's. Possilpark had been an APT since the mid seventies and the Possilpark Parent Teachers Association Action Group used this status in its campaign stating that,

"...in 1976 the region's strategy for multiple deprivation recognised that the social consequences of living in this area were low income, lack of self-esteem, stress, restricted choice in everything from housing to groceries. One of the basic strategies to counteract these was- 'to ensure that the services provided in the poorer areas were as good as, if not

better than, the services provided in the better off areas.' "[16]

The Area Review Group recognised that the small and declining roll of Possilpark Secondary posed a serious problem but considered that,

"...the deprived character and close sense of community of the Possilpark District meant that the survival of the secondary school was essential to the community as a whole."[17]

The tone of the campaign for Possilpark High was entirely different from those in more affluent areas. The campaigners appealed to the Region in terms of its own social policy and cited concerns expressed by local social workers. The loss of jobs from the area was emphasised and special programmes within the school to combat problems arising from high drug and solvent abuse in Possilpark were stressed. There was also the fear of increased truancy because of the extra travelling distance and because of 'territorial concerns'. According to a campaign document,

"There are genuine fears among parents and children because of the long running territorial dispute between Ruchill and Possilpark. This becomes very obvious in the summer when Ruchill Park becomes a battleground between large crowds of youths from each area."[18]

Parents felt that condoned absences would increase, drug abuse would increase and a closure would add to the spiral of deprivation. All of these arguments were used in discussion with the Area Review Group and as noted above the group recommended the retention of the school. However, the Regional Review Group recommended closure but were overruled by the Labour Group.

After the reversal of the closure decision by the Labour Group the

proposal for the combination of primary 6 and 7 provision in Possilpark Secondary was referred back to the Area Review Group where, as in the case of Knightswood, details were added to the proposal and it was subsequently approved by the Education Committee with little fuss. It is surprising that a proposal was ever made for the closure of the school by the Regional Review Group. At area level it had been recognised that Possilpark suffered from substantial deprivation with a range of social problems to match any in Britain. In addition, while the school roll was small and was projected to stay at just under 500 for the next decade, it was not so small as to rule out any possibility of a future. The Region had been willing in the past to close schools in deprived areas (such as Adelphi Secondary in Gorbals in the early 1980's or St Columba of Iona) but, in these cases, rolls had become very low and there were viable local alternative schools. The campaign to save the Possilpark put pressure on Labour councillors, quoting the Region's strategy on multiple deprivation and pointing out the disadvantages already suffered in the area. Given their past stance on APT's the Labour Party found the campaign hard to resist and accordingly reversed the closure decision.

The case of Possilpark Secondary highlighted the way in which different sorts of arguments made the future of a school uncertain when measured against one set of criteria while closure was impossible against another. When looked at in terms of educational impact (as in the Area Review Group) the case for the retention of the school was persuasive though not overwhelming. In terms of finance, roll and equity across the Region the case for closure was very strong and as such closure was proposed by the Regional Review Group. In political and wider social terms the Labour Party felt the need to reverse the closure decision as it

could not be seen to cause such great damage to the type of area to which it was most strongly committed.

St Columba of Iona and Possilpark both had deprived catchment areas but one closed without protest and the other was saved. The key factor was that they differed in their 'community'. Possilpark was a council housing 'scheme' in a the north of Glasgow. St Columba of Iona served a wider and less coherent geographical community, as did all Catholic schools. The individual parts of the catchment area of St Columba would have been seen as priorities by the Region but there is evidence that the campaign waged to save Possilpark was supported by professional community workers. In such areas, the Region commonly provided directly employed staff on community education and social work projects as well as funding local voluntary initiatives. These workers were employed to promote community development and became involved in the campaign to save the school. Thus the Possilpark community gained access to telephones, photocopiers, and a range of facilities easily accessible to middle class groups. Roman Catholic schools looked to the Church to provide an alternative form of community support. If this was not forthcoming then a school stood at a major disadvantage with dispersed and demotivated parents. Community movements (in common with some of the Labour Party) saw Roman Catholic schools as opting out of the community and so were less likely to support them.

5.6 Notre Dame High

Notre Dame High was a traditional, formerly grant-aided Roman Catholic girls school located in Dowanhill in the West End of Glasgow;

an area which contains the University of Glasgow, BBC Scotland and a number of other employers of graduates and professionals. The Notre Dame High School Parents Action Group, in common with action groups of other schools in the West End, contained many academics and professionals The Parent Teacher Association was particularly sensitive to the charge that the school was elitist. In an open letter to the review group they stated,

"We are aware of certain misconceptions regarding the status of Notre Dame High School. We find it regrettable that some sections of the public may have retained out-dated and outmoded memories of the Notre Dame of the past. However it is a matter of grave concern and disquiet to the parents, pupils and staff of this school that such false and mistaken views may persist in the minds of some of the elected members of Strathclyde Regional Council. These views are an insult to the broad community represented by the pupils of Notre Dame High School and a cause of frustration to the staff who work with the entire ability range."[19]

The school had the difficult task of promoting its academic excellence while trying to convince interested parties of the wide variation in ability of its intake.[20]

The school was popular and contained a substantial number of girls who attended through placing requests (154 or 24% in 1987/8) and also a number of girls from ethnic minority backgrounds whose parents sought girls-only education. The single-sex nature of the establishment posed a threat to its existence as many councillors did not support segregated education. Further the perception that the school was privileged did not help its case in some quarters as it was seen in the same light as Paisley Grammar.

More tangibly there was considerable discontent expressed by the

Parent Teacher Association of St Thomas Aquinas on the effect the status of Notre Dame had on their school.[21] That association noted that the percentage of girls at St Thomas Aquinas, which had been 35.2% in 1982, had by 1987 fallen to 30.2%. They argued that St Thomas's suffered as a result, particularly with falling school rolls, in that some subjects which attracted girls more than boys were difficult to maintain. The association stated that subjects, such as girls' physical education, business studies, home economics, French, Spanish, Latin, music and biology, had a lower uptake than might be expected in a comprehensive school. They stated that there was some belief in the community that St Thomas's was in fact a boys-only school. In their literature they claimed,

"In comparing the zoning arrangements of St Thomas Aquinas with those of other co-educational comprehensives, we have failed to identify any other school with similar intake arrangements. We regard St Thomas Aquinas as a *uniquely* disadvantaged school."[22] (their emphasis)

As in other areas, the position of one school affected others in the area but in no other case studied in this thesis was as much open discontent directed from one school towards another.

In its discussions the Area Review Group gave special consideration to Notre Dame and four options were put forward. The first was that the school could be maintained on its current site as an all-girls secondary. If that option were taken up, £150,000 would have to be spent on upgrading fire safety precautions and negotiating a new lease. A second option was that the school be retained as an all girls secondary but on different premises. A third was closure and the fourth was amalgamation to form a coeducational school.

After the consultation process, the group felt that Notre Dame High should be retained and merely recommended that it should accept more pupils from the St Columba of Iona catchment area. This support of Notre Dame indicates a level of independence within the North West Area Review Group. The school was unusual in Strathclyde terms in being single-sex, housed in leased buildings and being seen in some quarters as elitist. In other areas of Strathclyde these factors would automatically have made a school vulnerable. Support for the school was expressed by one councillor when he told a consultation meeting in St Thomas Aquinas that the latest research in the USA suggested girls in single-sex schools achieved better results in certain subjects than girls in co-educational schools. In fact the promotion of single sex-schools by some parts of the feminist movement was used by supporters of the school increasingly over time. Arguments of this kind proved to be very far from the Strathclyde line.

The Regional Review Group's reversal of the Area Review Group's recommendation to save Notre Dame caused outrage. This occurred for several reasons. Firstly the false sense of security engendered by the support of the Area Review Group increased the bitterness with which the closure announcement was greeted. Secondly the reprieve given to Possilpark and Victoria Drive by the Labour Group left the Notre Dame campaigners feeling betrayed. The Directorate was left in the awkward position of giving reasons why the school should close when, in North West Area Review Group, they had contributed to the recommendation that it should remain open. In January 1988 the formal consultative document, on the closure of the school and its amalgamation with St Thomas Aquinas, was produced.[23] The Region's strategy in this document

was to give only general reasons for closure. The document notes that the catchment area of the school contained no APT's and that the school roll of 654 would either rise to 667 in 1990 with placing requests or fall to 442 without placing requests. The school was unusual in that the main building, built in 1939, was leased from the Order of Notre Dame and a smaller building was leased from the Scottish Council for Educational Technology. This ".. collection of buildings of varying ages..", as described by the document. was in need of upgrading. The document stated that ,

"It is considered that a good secondary education could be provided within the more modern premises occupied by St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School."

The catchment area of Notre Dame was contained within that of St Thomas Aquinas and the cost of travel arrangements was estimated to be £6,240 per annum. Estimated revenue savings as shown in table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Estimated Long Term Annual Savings Arising From Closure of Notre Dame

Teachers' Salaries	£452,520
Other Staff Costs	£107,530
Rates	£91,775
Property Costs	£51,175
Maintenance	£40,000
Admin. Costs	£5,000
Total	£748,000

The contrast between the fullness of the consultation of the Area Review Group and the sparseness of the proposal for closure is striking. To close because,

"Taking into account educational, social and financial factors, it is proposed that Notre Dame High School should be closed..."

to quote from the consultative document left little chance for supporters of the school to be won over by the strength of the Region's case. The savings given, which while substantial, were well short of those given for the closure of St Columba of Iona. This was because the reasonable size of Notre Dame made possible efficient deployment of staff in contrast to the large proportion of promoted staff and small classes in St Columba's. Suspicions surrounding the proposal varied from those who considered the councillors were either anti-single sex, anti-elitist or anti-Catholic or some combination of these. In a letter to the secretary of the Notre Dame High School Parents Action Group the Chairman of the Education Committee wrote,

"It is difficult for me, of course, to speculate on the motives of other members of the Central Review Group in recommending, as the majority of them did, the closure of Notre Dame. It is undoubtedly true that some Councillors have a very strong objection in principle to single-sex education, and both they and other councillors are likely to have been influenced by the recommendation of the respective Area Review Groups in Dumbarton and the East End that Notre Dame, Dumbarton, and Our Lady and St Francis should close. I do not recall any other reasons being produced in the Central Review Group discussion in support of the closure of Notre Dame, Glasgow."[24]

There seems little doubt that this feeling against single-sex schools must have been the major reason. Strathclyde had shown itself over the years keen to promote either evenness of provision or positive discrimination towards more deprived parts of the community. This trend towards standardisation, helped by government requirements concerning the content of education, promoted a bureaucratically 'tidy' system where all schools were as similar as possible. Roman Catholic schools and single-sex schools produced inefficiencies. Duplicate buildings were needed, pupils had to travel longer distances and lack of

flexibility resulted from their wider catchment groups. This was magnified in single-sex Roman Catholic schools and while the Labour Party was most unwilling to tackle the issue of Roman Catholic schools it was quite willing to take on the single-sex issue.

The proposal to close the school provoked an angry response and a well organised campaign. Because the schools in Glasgow North West had not had the same experience of closure threats as schools in Paisley, they had not built up a stock of arguments and facts to back their case. Nonetheless in a short campaign they made a considerable impact. Schools such as Paisley Grammar and Notre Dame High, which have long histories and good academic records, were able to quickly assemble a group of influential supporters from both parents and former pupils. Newer schools in more deprived areas such as Possilpark and St Columba of Iona were unable to do this. The Notre Dame Parents Action Group organised letter-writing and lobbying campaigns. They produced newsletters with input from pupils; briefing notes on councillors with notes on likely voting patterns and 'soft spots' in terms of lobbying; lists of media contacts and notes on responses to media questions which were made available to group members. They were also able to finance the placement of half page advertising features in local papers and to co-opt and instruct solicitors, call on experts in other fields and quickly raise finance.

An additional source of support came from the Glasgow Moslem community which threatened court action over the withdrawal of single-sex schools.[25] Though the multi-ethnicity of schools was often stressed in school closure arguments, particularly by schools in Glasgow North West

it was an issue about which Roman Catholic schools were ambivalent. Notre Dame did highlight the multicultural nature of the school but it avoided any mention of other religions being accommodated. The school was happy to acknowledge the presence of children from different ethnic backgrounds but was less willing to suggest the dilution of its Catholic nature. In this the school was very much aware of the importance the Hierarchy attached to retaining distinctively Roman Catholic schools, even if the price to pay was the closure of some schools to maintain the system as a whole.

The formal consultation produced 668 submissions from parents (individually and organised), pupils, staff, unions, the Roman Catholic Church and the local Member of Parliament (George Galloway) among others.[26] The submissions were varied in analysis and tone but essentially those from the Notre Dame camp were against the closure while those from St Thomas Aquinas were in favour of it. Many submissions praised Notre Dame in terms of its academic work and of its ethos and atmosphere. There were a large number of objections to the fact that there had been no clear statement of the educational and social advantages of the closure and no acknowledgement of the advantages of single-sex education. There was much questioning of the property costs and other savings which had been published.

Within this consultation there were some objections which the Region could happily agree with. Others were either based on misunderstandings or expressed points of view with which the Region had no sympathy. In the first category, some respondents saw a plot to undermine Roman Catholic education and felt it was grossly unfair that

two Roman Catholic schools were proposed for closure while no non-denominational schools were threatened. Some respondents were under the impression that all the teaching staff at Notre Dame would be sacked and some simply felt that there was a determination by officials to mislead people. In the second category were concerns that girls who had opted for Notre Dame would now have to go back to their neighbourhood school and those who felt they would have to turn to the private sector for single-sex education. Strathclyde had no truck with either of these objections.

Those in favour of the proposal expressed their faith in St Thomas Aquinas Secondary and looked forward to the establishment of a normal coeducational Roman Catholic Secondary School. They also supported the change in terms of widening opportunities and were happy with the prospect of boys and girls from individual families attending the same school. While inspection of the submissions reveals a great deal of support for St Thomas Aquinas, they do not express the same sense of outrage and anger as do those in favour of retaining Notre Dame. This can be attributed to the greater support which can be expected from the large number of parents who opted for the school and even more so from the seriousness of the possible outcomes. For St Thomas Aquinas the worst case was the status quo while for Notre Dame it was closure.

The local Labour Member of Parliament (George Galloway) had always been supportive of Notre Dame but crucially the Roman Catholic Church did not give its full backing. The Church's submission stated that the main issue was,

"...to ensure good, effective education in Catholic schools for all pupils, boys as well as girls, in the areas currently served by St Columba of Iona, St Thomas Aquinas and Notre Dame High School."[27]

The Church suggested the retention of St Columba of Iona and St Thomas Aquinas to serve the redrawn catchment areas of the three schools. This was an idea for which there is no evidence of public support. Its lack of clear backing for Notre Dame was important as the Church had a great deal of informal influence on the Council. It seems unlikely that the Church would not be informally consulted as to its views on any major issue concerning Roman Catholic schools and, as many councillors were Roman Catholic, the views of the Hierarchy carried great weight. The Church also had the ability to use publicity effectively, as it had done in Paisley. In addition, the Church had formal power, having a representative on the Education Committee and the right of appeal to the Secretary of State over any closure decision. The opinion of the Church was thus a crucial factor which could tip the balance in disputed cases.

In the middle of the debate, the ground rules were changed by the introduction of the '80% rule' discussed in chapter 4 (Notre Dame being over 80% full). Nonetheless, the Region pressed on with the closure process, insisting that a merger of Notre Dame and St Thomas's should take place in St Thomas's building. The published reasons for this were that while most of the arguments in favour of the retention of Notre Dame were based on the fine record of the school, there was no reason that this excellence could not be transferred to an amalgamated school. Secondly, it was felt that the difficulties faced by St Thomas Aquinas because of the imbalance in its roll were insoluble within the current

arrangements. Thirdly the case for savings based on rationalisation of buildings was put forward. Following the closure recommendation by the Director of Education, the Region voted on 28 April 1988 for the closure of Notre Dame and its amalgamation with St Thomas Aquinas. By this stage all parties were aware that this move essentially passed the decision to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

The Notre Dame High School Parents Action Group, which had argued for the retention of the school in various documents, now set out its arguments out in a submission to the Secretary of State.[28] This stated that the Region's case for closure was bogus in that no arguments for it on educational or social grounds were made. The campaigners felt that the projected financial savings were grossly overstated and crucially, that the position of the Church had been misrepresented in the Region's report on the consultation. They stated,

"In the report it is stated that 'the Catholic Church supports the closure of Notre Dame High School'. In fact, there is no such statement in the Church's submission, nor can this be inferred from what is said. The Church's submission recommends two possible alternative solutions, depending upon whether or not Notre Dame closes; no *opinion* is expressed on this latter event. Indeed in a recent meeting between the parents and the Archbishop of Glasgow, he expressed his support for the school." (their emphasis)

Quite where the Church stood was unclear. In an interview in the *Scottish Catholic Observer* headed 'Where we Stand on School Closures' the Archbishop of Glasgow was quoted as saying,

"In the West End of Glasgow of Glasgow there is an obvious imbalance due to the decisions of Strathclyde Region to close Notre Dame High School and to amalgamate it with St Thomas Aquinas' and to close Columba of Iona School. Now in this West End area there are

eight non-denominational secondary schools which have been left untouched; and of the five Catholic schools, two of those are being closed, while one of them's asked to (provide) schooling for an extremely wide catchment area.....Many parents are unwilling to send their children ... through different urban areas which today can be highly dangerous. So we are making representation that for our needs we require at least two mixed secondary schools in that north-west area of Glasgow."[29]

The position taken here seems to be that the Archbishop portrayed the closure of the school as a *fait accompli* while in reality the Church could have appealed to the Secretary of State over the closure. In fact the Church did appeal to the Secretary of State but this was in terms of the overall equity of the proposal rather than to oppose the closure of Notre Dame. Privately some supporters of the school were highly critical at the Church's lack of backing. For instance in a prepared sheet on "Responses to Press if NDHS is Reprieved" in which answers were suggested to campaigners the response to "What does TW/Church think of this?" (TW being the Archbishop) was to be "We suggest that you ask Archbishop Winning himself." followed by, "We are sure that he will be pleased that the West End of Glasgow will not now lose one of its two remaining Catholic secondary schools."

In the final analysis the backing which counted came from the Scottish Office under the 80% rule. After the decision by the Regional Review Group to recommend closure the Notre Dame, parents began a campaign of attempting to win the support of Conservative Ministers. Members of the parents group wrote to Michael Forsyth, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State responsible for Education, praising his understanding of the issues involved and contrasting this with the lack of understanding shown by the Shadow Scottish Secretary.

This led to the Minister for Education arranging to visit the school on 14 March 1988. This was felt by the Action Group to be a very positive. The Minister stated that,

"... the Secretary of State would not only consider the popularity of schools and pupil rolls in regard to capacity. Other factors, such as parents' wishes to retain single-sex schools would be fully taken into account."[30]

This support was crucial and led to a letter dated 15 June 1988 from the Scottish Education Department to the Director of Education which stated,

"The Secretary of State has.... considered the information and the argument underlying the Authority's proposal to close Notre Dame High School and to amalgamate it with St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School. He has also considered the representations regarding the proposal which he has received from members of the public. He finds that Notre Dame High School is firmly identified as a successful school with a marked popular appeal, and that it is providing secondary education of a high standard in an environment which is attractive to parents over a wide area in the west of Scotland. He concludes that Notre Dame is capable of continuing as a successful secondary school. Accordingly he is not prepared to give his consent to the closure of Notre Dame High School under section 22B of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980."

Thus the school was reprieved. Mention has been made above of an imbalanced triumvirate of power consisting of central government, councillors and the Directorate. For Roman Catholic schools, the Hierarchy must be added to this list since the local bishop or archbishop has great personal power. There is evidence that in Adapting to Change the Church did not make its position clear to parents groups. At various times St Thomas Aquinas and Notre Dame parents groups felt that their conflicting cases were being supported. The fact that Church decisions were not made openly meant that an air of intrigue was introduced.

Interview material suggests that the Archbishop was far more concerned about the education of boys than of girls (see chapter 6) and as a result was rather indifferent to the fate of Notre Dame. The position of the Church will be considered further in Chapter 6.

5.7 Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock

In order to extend the scope of this study, the impact of Adapting to Change was considered in two other geographical areas; Bridgeton/Dalmarnock and East Kilbride. Much of the experience of these areas was similar to that of Paisley and Glasgow North West and so, in order to avoid repetition, this section will highlight aspects of Adapting to Change which have not already been discussed.

These areas were chosen in order to offer balance to the in-depth examination of Paisley and Glasgow North West. Bridgeton/Dalmarnock provides an example of a very small, deprived area in which a closure proposal resulted in controversy. Though this was considerable it did not generate as much publicity as the proposals in Paisley or Glasgow North West. East Kilbride, on the other hand, was a medium sized, relatively prosperous area in which Adapting to Change did not produce much public anxiety, apart from during one brief period.

Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock was the smallest non-rural area to be reviewed in phase 1 of Adapting to Change. It lies in the inner east end of Glasgow and suffered from considerable social deprivation.[31] As can be seen from table 5.6 it contained only three secondary schools.

Table 5.6 Strathclyde secondary schools in Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock in 1987/8 [32]

	Capacity	Roll 87/88	Roll 97/98	Date of Building(s)
ND SCHOOL				
John Street	1,238	437	337	1970
RC SCHOOLS				
Our Lady & St Francis	1,088	711	682	1900
St Mungo's	1,386	464	544	1975
Total	2,474	1,175	1,226	

The nature of the schools meant that only one issue was likely to arise in the secondary sector review; possible rationalisation of the two Roman Catholic schools. Our Lady and St Francis (OL&SF) was a girls school and St Mungo's Academy catered for Catholic boys. As John Street Secondary (distinguished by having had the worst exam results in Glasgow)[33] was the only non-denominational secondary in the area it could not be considered for closure, particularly since two non-denominational schools in the area had been closed in 1984.[34]

The Area Review Group carried out its task in a similar fashion to its counterparts in Paisley and Glasgow North West, although it had a considerably lighter workload. After examination of the issues the group recommended amalgamation of the two Catholic schools in the St Mungo's building. They stated after a vote that,

"After a full discussion of the social educational and financial factors of the possible amalgamation of Our Lady and St Francis and St Mungo's Academy it was the view of the group that there was merit in consulting parents, staff and other interested parties on the suggestion that the amalgamation take place in the building currently occupied by St Mungo's Academy."[35]

In effect, this started the closure process of OL&SF. The school had many similarities to Notre Dame in Glasgow North West. It was part-owned by a religious order which, on threat of closure, offered the buildings as a gift it to the Region.[36] It also had a long history (foundation 1847) and was housed in a collection of buildings of different ages and with limited facilities. Like Notre Dame, it had the full support of parents and attracted pupils from outwith its catchment area.[37] However, unlike Notre Dame it was situated in a deprived area which contained a parallel boys-only school which was housed in a modern building with good facilities. OL&SF attracted passionate support from parents and the local community. Nonetheless the Area Review Group's recommendation for amalgamation was confirmed by the Regional Review Group, the Labour Group and eventually the Regional Council.

Like Notre Dame, the school did not have the support of the Labour Party but it did attract a number of powerful backers. Peter McCann, a former Lord Provost of Glasgow, acted as solicitor and spokesperson for the campaign and Councillor Dr Christopher Mason, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Group on the Regional Council, was involved in the campaign. There was also some input by the Conservatives (see also chapter 6). The Education Minister (Michael Forsyth) had visited the school on 23 September 1987 and Professor Brian Griffiths, head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, came to Glasgow to speak to parents on the possibility of attaining self governing status.[38] On the other hand the school did not have the full support of the Church. In response to closure plans, the Archbishop of Glasgow stated,

"Our aim is to ensure that a good effective education is available for all young people, boys as well as girls, who live in the catchment area of the schools in the east end of the city. We support the proposal as the best means of securing that aim. Nevertheless we are deeply worried by the climate of rancour and bitterness which has marked what has been an understandably emotional debate among parents and teachers. We therefore suggest that the phasing of the amalgamation be adjusted..."[39]

This support for (eventual) amalgamation undermined the hopes of supporters of the school.

The crucial event for OL&SF, as for some of the other schools discussed in this thesis was the introduction of the '80% rule' in January 1988. As discussed above this saved Paisley Grammar and Notre Dame but, as can be seen from Table 5.6 OL&SF was not 80% full (the figures give an occupancy of 65%). As the number of girls attending the school was not open to dispute, supporters of the school quickly began to challenge the calculation of the school's capacity.[40] In early February the parents wrote to the Region asking for details such as the date when the capacity figure was agreed; plans of school buildings; computer print out of class capacities; minutes of the meeting at which the Area Schools Council had agreed on the figures and details of accepted criteria for measuring capacities. [41]

The OL&SF parents commissioned chartered surveyors Kean, Kennedy and Partners and the Department of Building at Heriot-Watt University to report on the capacity of the school.[42] Kean, Kennedy and Partners and Heriot-Watt differed in their estimations but eventually the parents' group argued that the school had a capacity of 772. This gave an occupancy rates of 83% which, if accepted, would have meant the closure of the school would have to be referred to the Secretary of State under the

'80% rule'.

The parents' questioning of the capacity figure caused much work for the Directorate. A letter between two officials highlighted some problems discovered by the Directorate.

"My experience in the Easterhouse Review Group had demonstrated that many of our stated capacities proved on investigation to be ill-founded and, as you know, a tour of the OL&SF building revealed that the schedule counted two rooms twice and was incorrectly added."[43]

Also it seems that the school had made some legitimate changes of use which reduced the capacity by 13. [44] The '80% rule' had led to a situation where such detail was important and could affect the future of the school. The capacity argument was a crucial factor in the formal consultation. The Region responded to representations made on behalf of parents by stating that,

"The capacity of a secondary school needs to be recalculated from time to time to take account of such factors as maximum class sizes and changes in curriculum patterns. The recent recalculation of the capacity of Our Lady and St Francis', resulting in the figure of 978, used the same criteria as would be employed in the case of other schools in Strathclyde. The significance in the disagreement over the capacity of the school is that either of the figures quoted by the parents' action group would require the referral of any closure to the Secretary of State."[45]

Following the consultation on the merger 447 responses were received on the proposals. Those from OL&SF which were unanimous in support of the school. However, the St Mungo's Academy Parents' Group pressed for the speedy merger of the school.[46] In its response the local Schools Council made an unusual observation based on the

experience of closure elsewhere. It stated that the proposals seemed similar to those used when Riverside Secondary closed (in June 1984) in which pupils and staff suffered. Pupils who were left in the closing school experienced unbalanced and constantly changing timetables during the closing year and they did not reach their academic potential in the receiving school. It is interesting to note that the Region did not seem to have investigated the effects of previous closures. It claimed that £723,230 per annum would be saved and that there would be no additional work needed at St Mungo's (the same comments apply to savings as given for others above). The Region thus proposed that the merger should take place and pressed ahead with plans.

Following the closure decision, the parents employed a variety of tactics to save the school (appeals to the Secretary of State, the Prime Minister, requests for judicial review) similar to those employed by campaigns in Paisley and Glasgow North West. Their most powerful argument (on capacity) was eventually dismissed by the Scottish Office. In response to a letter by the parents' solicitor, the Scottish Office stated that the concerns of OL&SF had been treated as complaints under section 70 of the Education Act (Scotland) in alleging that the Region had failed to discharge its duties in deciding not to refer to the Secretary of State. However, the Secretary of State was not satisfied that the school was occupied above 80% of capacity and so made the decision that the Region did not have to refer the proposals to him. The Church had also appealed, asking that the proposals be postponed, but the Secretary of State did not feel that the proposal caused significant deterioration in the position of denominational schools in comparison to that of other schools. Thus he dismissed the case made by the Archbishop that the

merger should take effect more slowly than proposed. [47] The parents continued to fight for the school but the decision to leave the Region to proceed as it wished sealed the fate of OL&SF. Why some schools survived and others did not will be discussed below, but it seems that there was too little political capital to be gained for the Conservatives to save a school in an area which would be unlikely ever to support the them.

Further, there may have been a feeling that there had been enough interference in Adapting to Change, particularly as towards the end of the exercise the closure list was becoming progressively smaller. Further the lack of support of the Church and the strong feeling in favour of a merger by St Mungo's clearly weakened the OL&SF case.

5.8 East Kilbride

East Kilbride is an area which could be described as having a 'quiet' Adapting to Change. There is less to say about the area because the East Kilbride Area Review Group shunned the idea of major closures thus weakening the hand of members of the Labour leadership who would have liked to see substantial rationalisation in the area. East Kilbride is one of three new towns in Strathclyde, having been developed in the post-war period as a home for Glasgow's overspill. The East Kilbride Area Review Group considered schools both in the new town and in surrounding rural areas. Within the area there was a range of social conditions but due to modern housing stock and low levels of unemployment the widespread deprivation of inner city Glasgow was not present.[48] The town was provided with modern schools which had been built for an unusually young population. As Table 5.7 shows, by the

mid eighties there was considerable over-capacity.

Table 5.7 Strathclyde Secondary Schools in East Kilbride, West, East and Area in 1987/8[49]

	Capacity	Roll 87/88	Roll 97/98	Date of Building(s)
ND SCHOOLS				
Ballerup	1,027	803	574	1978
Claremont	1,902	1,103	868	1970
Duncanrig	1,991	903	1,049	1956/69/70/74
Hunter	1,242	587	622	1963/75
Strathaven	851	860	590	1850/1904/30/84
Total		7,013	4,256	3,703
RC SCHOOLS				
St Andrew's	817	705	450	1978
St Bride's	1,857	824	673	1956/70/75
Total	2,674	1,529	1,123	

A discussion paper provided for the Area Review Group stated that,

"As will be appreciated from the statistics ... these surplus places will increase substantially in the next few years and the projected birth rates and net migration projections do not suggest any reversal of this pattern. The review group may wish to consider ways of reducing this over-provision of places, taking into account the physical location of buildings."[50]

This reflected suggestions made by the officers involved with the group that closures could be considered. In addition, the divisional education officer suggested a teachers in-service centre for East Kilbride could be created and pointed to the Group's ability to suggest alternative uses for buildings and to the conventional primary/secondary divide. He stated,

"Other options in addition to those quoted above for the use of

surplus accommodation could certainly be considered by the Group."[51]

In fact, the Directorate prepared materials which proposed closures of two school, Hunter High[52] and St Andrew's. [53] The officers explored the impact of housing developments and possible savings which could be made by closure. For Hunter High, annual savings of £897,330 were anticipated and proposals were made for the redistribution of the catchment area. Similarly in the case of St Andrew's High it was stated that new housing would have a minimal effect on the roll and it was anticipated that closure would save £418,440 annually. Study of the documentation indicates that the Review Group concentrated initially on the primary sector, becoming involved in details of catchment areas (as far as considering individual streets) [54] but the department formally proposed that both schools be closed. However the Area Review Group was unwilling to take up the officers' suggestions. The Group proposed the closure of one rural primary (Jackton Primary School, roll 11 in 1987/8 with a projected roll of 7 in 1997/8). East Kilbride was one of the areas where proposals were seen to be too cautious by the Regional Review Group. In December 1987 the Regional Review Group recommended the closure of Hunter High and St Andrew's High as well as three primary schools (Jackton, Auldhouse and St Hilary's). In the following weeks political pressure led to the reprieve of both secondary schools and of St Hilary's Primary. There seems to have been no political will to push for rationalisation in East Kilbride and so all secondary schools survived. Apart from substantial protest following the Regional Review Group proposals, East Kilbride was one of the areas which aroused least controversy. This supports the assertion of councillors (see chapter 6) that some area review groups set out to avoid closures. Those

who did this largely succeeded, though this highlighted the inequity of the review system.

5.9 A Regional Overview

Table 5.8 shows the pattern of decisions made concerning the secondary schools across the Region. In a number of cases approval of the Secretary of State was not required. This was the case in the less popular non-denominational schools. Approval was required in the case of all Roman Catholic schools but rejection could only be based on identification of unfair treatment in comparison to schools in the non denominational-sector.[55] Schools which were involved in amalgamations affected by the '80% rule' (such as John Neilson Secondary which was to merge with Castlehead High which was over 80% capacity) were also subject to the Secretary of States's approval. As can be seen from table 5.8, the Secretary of State did not oppose closure in any case except for those covered by the '80% rule'. Detailed analysis of all the reviews is outside the scope of this study but it does seem that the pattern of the retention of schools in middle class and very deprived areas is similar to the areas considered in this chapter and in chapter 4. The pattern of closure proposals in both primary and secondary sectors can be seen in table 5.9.

Table 5.9 The Results of Adapting to Change Phase 1 across Strathclyde in Primary and Secondary Sectors[56]

	Primary	Secondary
Area Review Group Closure Recommendations	29	9
Regional Review Group Recommendations	41	22
Labour Group/ Council Decisions	24	12
Eventual Closures	20	8

Table 5.8 The Results of Adapting to Change Phase 1 in the Secondary Sector showing Area (ARG) and regional (RRG) Review Group Recommendations and Decisions by the Council and Secretary of State.

Division (School)	ARG's	RRG	Council	Secretary of State	Final
Ayr					
Ayr Academy	retain	close	reprieve	not applicable	not applicable
Sacred Heart, Girvin	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
Dunbarton					
St Patrick's, Dumbarton	close	close	close	no intervention	closed
Glasgow					
All Saints	retain	close	reprieve	not applicable	not applicable
Allan Glen's	retain	close	close	not required	closed
Colston	close	close	close	not required	closed
Garthamlock	retain	close	reprieve	not applicable	not applicable
Notre Dame	retain	close	close	rejected (80% rule)	reprieved
Our Lady and St Francis	close	close	close	no intervention	closed
Possilpark	retain	close	reprieve	not applicable	not applicable
St Columba of Iona	close	close	close	no intervention	closed
St Gregory's	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
Victoria Drive	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
Westwood	close	close	close	not required	closed
Lanark					
Hunter	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
St Andrew's	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
Renfrew					
John Neilson	close	close	close	no intervention	closed
Paisley Grammar	close	close	close	rejected ('80% rule')	reprieved
St Aelred's	retain	close	new review	no intervention	closed*
St Brendan's	retain	close	reconsider	not applicable	not applicable
St Mirin/Margaret's	close	close	new review	no intervention	closed*
Stanely Green	close	close	close	not required	closed

* (One new Roman Catholic Secondary opened in the John Neilson building)

Thus the pattern of modest Area Review Group closure recommendations, followed by extensive Regional Review Group recommendations which were then tempered by the Labour Group and further reduced by the Secretary of State was repeated across the Region.

5.10 Discussion

This chapter has looked at individual schools more closely than did chapter 4. Attention has been paid to the work of the Glasgow North West Area Review Group and to the fates of three particular schools within that area. In addition, consideration has been given to the reviews of Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock and East Kilbride. This strengthens the overall analysis, by considering different types of areas to Paisley. While the conduct of Adapting to Change was broadly similar in both areas there were some significant differences. Several important points emerge, firstly in terms of the conduct of the reviews and secondly in the light of the wider areas of interest of this thesis.

Firstly, as noted above, it is clear that Adapting to Change was approached differently in different areas. Table 5.10 highlights this. It can be seen from chapters 4 ad 5 that areas with broadly similar occupancy rates took different approaches to closures. For instance Paisley Area Review Group recommended that half of the non-denominational schools (occupancy 58%) should close while East Kilbride (non denominational occupancy 61%) felt that no closures were necessary. This lack of equity and evenness (which the design of Adapting to Change made inevitable) undermined the procedure and led in part to the wide-scale changes made by the Regional Review Group.

Table 5.10 Strathclyde Secondary Total Capacity and Rolls and Roll Projections (with % occupancy) in Four Area Review Groups[57]

	Capacity	Roll 87/88 (% occupancy)	Roll 97/98(% occupancy)
Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock			
Non Denominational	1,238	437 (35%)	337(27%)
RC	2,474	1,175(47%)	1,226(49%)
East Kilbride			
Non Denominational	7,013	4,256(61%)	3,703(52%)
RC	2,674	1,529(57%)	1,123(42%)
Glasgow North West			
Non Denominational	9,182	4,710(51%)	5,019(55%)
RC	6,126	3,002(49%)	2,926(48%)
Paisley			
Non Denominational	7,217	4,163(58%)	3,300(46%)
RC	2,248	1,269(56%)	1,523(67%)

Within the review the different agendas and perspectives of the different parties are glaringly obvious. Parents' groups could have anticipated the clashes in approach between central and local government but they may not have anticipated the differences within Strathclyde itself. The Glasgow North West Group in particular looked at the issue educationally, the Regional Review Group in terms of finance and cross-regional equity while the Labour Group considered political costs particularly in relation to the impact of proposals on deprived areas. This was compounded by increasing government intervention in the issue. Schools could put forward a case based on the quality of their exam results, the poverty of their pupils, the excellence of their discipline or the unlikeliness of their pupils to attend another school. Some schools used most of these arguments and often selected characteristics of the

school to suit the body appealed to.

It is an indication of how far educational consensus had broken down when the government and the local authority took diametrically opposed views on which schools should shut. Notre Dame was seen by the government, in a similar light to Paisley Grammar, as a school which should be saved at all costs while on the Region's side it was seen as a very suitable case for closure. The inverse of this was the case in relation to Possilpark and Merksworth whose closure the government would not have opposed but which the Region were anxious to retain. This dichotomy was due to the value placed by the Conservatives on ethos, tradition and variation of provision. On the other hand the Labour Party valued equality and positive discrimination.

Complicating this simple division were a number of other factors. As has been mentioned, on the Conservative side the opportunity to embarrass Labour and gather some public support was not to be missed though this was in the case of Notre Dame more by accident than design in that the '80% rule' was primarily designed to save Paisley Grammar. For OL&SF this represented a major lifeline though in their case central government chose not to use it to save the school. For Labour, political pressures were also in play but in addition there was a bureaucratic strand within the review process which selected 'untidy' schools for closure i.e. schools in buildings the Region did not own, single-sex schools and schools in old buildings.

The political pressures which resulted in action are also significant and back up evidence from the previous chapter. The Labour Party went

against the wishes of the middle class Catholic Notre Dame parents while the Conservatives felt compelled to offer support. Labour had no great need of the approval of those who might vote against them while the Conservatives needed all the support they could muster, though clearly some areas such as Bridgeton/Dalmarnock were not seen to be worthy of intervention. This was similar to the Paisley situation but additionally indicates that the Region was willing to take on Catholic parents provided the parents did not have the full backing of the Church. If, as in Paisley, the Church backed schools, then the Region was very circumspect in its approach. In the case of areas such as Possilpark, the Tories offered no support but Labour were very sensitive to arguments based on the deprived status of the area and were willing to accept a non-standard solution which they would have been unlikely to countenance in an affluent area. This corresponds with the Merksworth situation. Bondi comments on the ability of middle class parents to find a way to save schools.[58] In Adapting to Change there seems to have been a class 'sandwich'. Schools such as St Thomas Aquinas were in a similar (though less severe) situation to Stanely Green in Paisley. They had major concerns over the balance of their school but these concerns were given little consideration. The failure of the OL&SF campaign underlines this. If the area review group in Glasgow North West had threatened some of the 'middle order' schools (i. e. those whose rolls were low but not extremely low) rather than adopting a 'low optimum' school roll it may have been that they would have closed without excessive political turbulence. The routes taken to influence political decisions and the effectiveness of these is an area which will be returned to in Chapter 6.

Another related issue is the extent to which an individual school can

be seen in isolation from the wider community. The government approach was that a school was an island with particular qualities; the Labour Party took the view that schools were part of a system. It is clear from Adapting to Change that parents did not readily respond to appeals that schools should close for the greater good of the system. However, the individual school approach did leave other schools and children with a price to pay. Schools such as St Thomas Aquinas were left with a heavily imbalanced roll (far more boys than girls) and with families separated at the end of primary school with boys going to St Thomas's and girls going to Notre Dame. In addition, other Catholic schools in the area would have continued to have small rolls and to lose able girls to Notre Dame, thus affecting the social and intellectual mix.

Wider issues of power in this chapter point to similar conclusions as those mentioned in chapter 4. The Directorate exerted great power in the setting up of systems and in agenda setting but had much less influence when the most difficult decisions were to be made. The non-action in East Kilbride which ignored a 'rationalising' agenda is an example of this. The non-traditional solutions offered for some schools in Glasgow North West stemmed from the confidence given by the presence of influential councillors on the Area Review Group rather than the educational force of the officers. There is little evidence of officer domination, rather of a compliant Directorate serving powerful political masters. In Strathclyde there might have been a far more efficient Adapting to Change process if a Leadership Class had negotiated an acceptable closure programme with other members of that class in the Scottish Office. The evidence supports the view of McPherson and Raab that the power of an educational elite (in this case the directorate) is limited when political forces are at their

strongest.

Following from the evidence presented in chapters 4 and 5, chapter 6 will examine the issues from the points of view of the participants, including evidence from interviews with senior councillors. Their accounts throw a different light on some of the decisions described in chapters 4 and 5 and demonstrate that personality and personal background influenced the process.

[1] Strathclyde Regional Council, Glasgow Division (26 Oct. 1987) *Adapting to Change, North West Area Review Group: A Discussion Paper.* DJH/ES.

[2] Jordanhill College School had at one time been attached to Jordanhill College of Education but was transferred to direct funding from the Scottish Office after Strathclyde Region had refused to make it part of their provision.

[3] Strathclyde Regional Council. Appendix used for various documents.

[4] Possilpark Parent Teacher Association (c. Nov. 1987) *The Case for Maintaining this School at the Centre of its Community, Now and in the Future.*

[5] Drs Green and Mason.

[6] Glasgow Hillhead; won by Roy Jenkins for Social Democratic/Liberal in a 1982 by election; retained in 1983 General Election; won by George Galloway for Labour in the May 1987 General Election.

[7] Strathclyde Regional Council, Glasgow Division (26 Oct. 1987) *Adapting to Change, North West Area Review Group: A Discussion Paper.* DJH/ES. The roll projections differ from those on Table 5.1 which seem to have been later. The capacity of Knightswood Secondary differs in the sources used for Table 5.1 and 5.2. The reason for the different figures is not clear

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid. paragraph 5.2

[10] Correspondence from the files held by Strathclyde Region on Adapting to Change.

[11] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Glasgow Division (Nov. 1987) *Glasgow North West Area Review Group: Report for the Regional Review Group.*

[12] St Columba of Iona Secondary School (13 Nov. 1987) *Adapting to Change: A Role for St Columba of Iona Secondary School.*

[13] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of St Columba of Iona Secondary School.*

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Possilpark Parent Teacher Association (c. Nov. 1987) *The Case for Maintaining this School at the Centre of its Community, Now and in the Future.*

[17] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Glasgow Division (Sep. 1988) *Discussion Document on Possilpark Secondary.* EO/KB/CSM.

[18] Possilpark Parent Teacher Association (c. Nov. 1987) *The Case for Maintaining this School at the Centre of its Community, Now and in the Future.*

[19] Notre Dame High School Parent Teacher Association (c. Nov. 1987) *The Defence of Notre dame High School: The Justification and the Facts.*

[20] In 1983 when exam league tables were published Notre Dame came out as the top Glasgow local authority school.

[21] St Thomas Aquinas Parent Teacher Association (Nov. 1987) *Adapting to Change: Submission to the North West Review Group.*

[22] Ibid.

[23] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Proposed Closure of Notre Dame High School and its Amalgamation with St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School.*

[24] Letter from Dr Green to Dr Brock of Notre Dame High School Parents' Action Group, 12 January 1988.

[25] *Scotsman*, 20 January 1988.

[26] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Mar. 1988)*The Results of the Consultative Process on the Proposed Closure of Notre Dame High School and its Amalgamation with St Thomas Aquinas Secondary School.*

[27] Roman Catholic Church submission following Consultation Document.

[28] Notre Dame High School Parents Action Group (c. Mar. 1988) *A Submission to the Secretary of State for Scotland in Support of Retention of Notre Dame High School.*

[29] *Scottish Catholic Observer*, 29 May 1988.

[30] *Scotsman*, 15 March1988.

[31] Unemployment in January 1988 in Calton Ward (a major part of the area) stood at 38.2% (Glasgow average 19.6%) and youth unemployment at 55.3% (Glasgow average 27.3%) from City of Glasgow District Council (August 1988) *Ward Profile, No. 26 Calton.*

[32] Strathclyde Regional Council. Appendix used for various documents.

[33] John Street 45th, OL&SF 8th and St Mungo's 7th (out of 45 Glasgow Division Secondaries) in terms of examination results. See *Glasgow Herald* 14 October 1983.

[34] Riverside and Adelphi Secondaries.

[35] Bridgeton/Dalmarnock Area Review Group meeting. 20 October 1987.

[36] The grounds and buildings were owned by the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. The offer was made in a letter from Franciscan Generalate to the region 11 November 1987.

[37] 40 placing requests in 1987/88 to OL&SF, 2 to John Street and 25 to St Mungo's. Strathclyde Regional Council (26 Aug. 1987) *Education Provision in the East End of Glasgow. Paper prepared by the Divisional Education officer for Area Review Group.* JH/CB.

[38] *Scotsman*,16 June 1988.

[39] Archbishop Winning's submission in response to the consultation document on the merger proposals (March 1988).

[40] No evidence was found,dating from before the introduction of the 80% rule, of questioning the calculation of capacity. In documents prepared for the OL&SF Action Group, prior to the '80% rule' eight points of concern are noted in response to the closure threat but capacity is not mentioned.

[41] Letter from McCann to Council on behalf of OL&SF parents, 2 Feb. 1988.

[42] Heriot-Watt University, Department of Building/ Kean, Kennedy and Partners (8 March 1988) *Capacity Report for Our Lady and St Francis Secondary School, Charlotte Street, Glasgow, G1.*

[43] Letter from P. Drake from K. Bloomer (16 Feb. 1988).

[44] Ibid.

[45] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education (Jan. 1988) *The Results of the Consultative Process on Proposed Closure of Our Lady and St Francis Secondary School and Amalgamation with St Mungo's Academy,* KB/JS.

[46] St Mungo's Academy Parents' Group (Jan. 1988) *Response to Consultation Document.*

[47] Letter from EC Davidson (SED) to P. McCann for OL&SF Parents.

[48] 10.8% unemployment from Parry (1988) op. cit., p. 35

[49] Strathclyde Regional Council. Appendix used for various documents.

[50] Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education Lanark Division (25 Aug. 1987) *Educational Provision in East Kilbride and the Surrounding Area, A Briefing Paper Prepared by the Divisional Education Officer for the East Kilbride Review Group.*

[51] Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education Lanark Division(c. Sep. 1987) *Briefing Paper Number 4.*

[52] Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education Lanark Division (c. Sep. 1987) *East Kilbride Area Review Group. Hunter High, East Kilbride,* (REDHC014/AF).

[53] Strathclyde Regional Council, Department of Education, Lanark Division (c. Sep. 1987) *East Kilbride Area Review Group; Educational Provision in the East Kilbride Area,* (REDHCO13/bsy).

[54] Strathclyde Regional Council Department of Education Lanark Division(c. Sep. 1987) op. cit.

[55] Under Section 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

[56] Adapted from Strathclyde figures.

[57] Adapted from Strathclyde figures.

[58] Bondi, L. (1987) 'School Closures and Local Politics: The Negotiation of Primary School Rationalisation in Manchester', *Political Geography Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 203-224.

Chapter 6 Adapting to Change: Points of View

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter Adapting to Change will be looked at from a number of different perspectives. Policy making can be examined by referring to documents, minutes and newspaper reports but these tell only part of the story. There is a long tradition in social science in which the history, inner feelings and self-perceptions of the actors are part of the explanation of human behaviour. Neglecting these factors leads to a diminished understanding of issues by ignoring personal views of the process. Here this acknowledgement of history and perception is extended to groups as well as individuals. Scottish education has a long history and the participants are informed and restricted by their perception of each group's power and role. Preceding chapters have given sufficient examples of events; the focus of this chapter will be on trying to understand the issues in terms of the social and political worlds of the participants. The evidence comes from a detailed study of the large amounts of documentation mentioned in preceding chapters and through interviews with, and writings of, some of the key players.

The chapter will therefore attempt the following. First it will consider Adapting to Change from the perspective of senior councillors. These councillors were at the heart of the issue and, it will be argued, were the most powerful force influencing Strathclyde's education policy. They also had a unique overview, having contact with senior officials, central government, union leaders, the Labour Party and constituents. The second part of the chapter will consider the positions of interest groups. In analyses of the mechanics of policy making increasing attention has

been paid in the past twenty five years to the perceptions of those involved. Work such as that of Ball, Heclo and Wildavsky, Kogan and of McPherson and Raab[1] has included consideration not only of actions, but also of what individuals perceived their roles to be. In this chapter attention will be paid to those concerned with education provision i.e. pupils, parents and teachers; intermediate organisations such as the Roman Catholic Church and the Educational Institute of Scotland; the Directorate; councillors and central government. Raab comments on material which considered backstage processes that helped produce policy and observes that,

"... it provides the basis for an intimate exploration of the engine rooms of policy that sustains the view that persons, relationships and institutional positions count for very much in the world of politics and policy."[2]

It is hoped that the present chapter will add this perspective to Adapting to Change by considering the pressures and individuals and groups (as gleaned from documentary sources and interviews) and suggesting where this background promoted or restricted power and influence.

6.2 The Views of Senior Councillors

The areas of personal opinion offer rich sources for better understanding of complex issues but also pose threats of misinterpretation and distortion. Here the view taken is that of McPherson and Raab who state of information gathered from interviews,

"Clearly we would not have bothered to talk to them had we not thought that they would explain, and that their explanations were essential to the cure for ignorance."[3]

While, as has been seen in chapters 4 and 5, central government and

national politicians were involved in Adapting to Change the most important influences on policy were senior Strathclyde councillors. Officials did hold some sway but, it will be argued, their power was on the wane during this period, particularly in issues of resource allocation. From the evidence considered in chapters 4 and 5 five key senior councillors were identified. Interviews were requested with these five. Three consented and two did not. The opinions of these men contributes greatly towards an understanding of the issue. Some facts were ill remembered but the interviews gave more confidence in identification of motives and personal roles than could be gleaned from documentary sources. The conduct of the interviews was as described in chapter 3 and topics covered included biography, the lead up to Adapting to Change, planning, area and regional review stages and their aftermath. Opinions were also sought on the contribution of the Roman Catholic Church, teachers unions and central government. Contributions have been edited to give continuity and avoid repetition. Omitted are factual descriptions which repeat detail already given in chapters 4 and 5. The councillors interviewed were as follows.

Councillor Charles Gray, who represented a Lanarkshire electoral division, became leader of the Labour Group and Council in 1986. He had been a councillor for over 35 years and was retired from a career in British Rail. Councillor Dr Malcolm Green was the Chairman of the Education Committee and had first become a councillor in 1973. He had experience as chairman of both the National Joint Negotiating Committee (which negotiated nationally with teachers unions on pay and conditions) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Education Committee. Councillor Dr Christopher Mason was a member

of the Education Committee and of the Adapting to Change working group. He was leader of the Liberal Democrat Group from 1986. Both Green and Mason were academics and represented Areas in the West End of Glasgow. All three devoted a great deal of time to Council business, were involved in wider Scottish politics and had long experience in local government. They were in effect professional politicians, a world away from officer dominated councillors on small scale pre regionalisation authorities.Their observations on Adapting to Change are given below; comment will be given at the end of each section.

(a) Pre-Adapting to Change period

Gray stated that in the early days of Strathclyde there was a 'peace at any price' approach. The new organisation was anxious not to appear in anything other than a good light. However as early as 1978 problems were resulting from falling school rolls, namely non teaching staff surpluses and curricular imbalance in small schools. In the early eighties the Scottish Office became increasingly reluctant to sanction new building work given Strathclyde's surplus capacity. However central government was aware of the sensitivity of the issue and did not exert undue pressure on the Council to reduce capacity. The previous leader of the Council was disquieted by the overcapacity but was not persuaded to act before his retiral in 1986. It was left to Gray as the new leader to tackle this problem. He claimed Adapting to Change as his own initiative demonstrating a willingness to be seen as a politician who would address difficult issues. The impression given was of a mature Council with a new leader, ready to tackle this difficult issue.

On the setting up of the Adapting to Change working group Gray stated

that selection for the committee was "done democratically but in actual fact it's me", demonstrating both possession and enjoyment of power. The membership was discussed with the deputy leader of the Council, the whips to check commitments of councillors and then with the chair of the working group who did not demur at any of the suggestions. Two able officials were earmarked; Gray said that on occasion such as this he tried to persuade the Director or Chief Executive to provide particular officials. The final decision on officials to serve on the group lay with the Director of Education. Even so it is telling that councillors identified officials to work on issues as it would be unlikely that the director would not provide the officials unless a pressing reason could be identified. Such identification of officials could also be seen as a political stamp of approval. In fact the most senior official identified became Strathclyde's Director of Education in 1988.

Gray stated that the councillor chosen as chair (Councillor Davidson) was seen as a difficult young man (the implication was that the leadership of the Party saw him as such). He had openly challenged the leadership of the Council on many occasions and was a focus of dissent within the Labour Group. However, Gray thought him the right man for the job as he had no vested interests in the potentially controversial geographical areas. He stated,

"People were cruel enough to think that since he was a bit of a political upstart if we gave him enough rope he would hang himself."

Gray had 'distant' respect for the councillor, whom he felt wanted to prove himself. According to Mason the working group were not chosen for any expertise though he confirmed that the chair was chosen because he was troublesome within the Labour Party. In his opinion this created

the risk for the Labour leadership that if Davidson survived he would emerge stronger. Therefore in the setting up of the investigation Gray addressed two political problems (falling rolls and Councillor Davidson) in a way that guaranteed some return. If Davidson was successful then progress would be made on falling school rolls. If he failed then his status would be diminished and political challenge reduced. In the event the school rolls problem was not solved and Davidson emerged stronger as blame was apportioned widely rather than to one person.

Green's account of the background to "Adapting to Change" agreed with that of Gray but interestingly he added that the Education Department, at the time, did not have dynamic professional leadership and so it was left to the politicians to act. This to some extent explains the lack of central professional direction given to officers and the weak input of the Directorate. However, Strathclyde did have a strong team of senior officers (five depute directors and six divisional education officers) who had the ability to give direction. It is argued here that lack of dynamism of the Director and his senior depute was not the sole or major cause of lack of professional direction. It is interesting that only Green expressed any concern about the qualities of officers. Green stated that the Party did not want to go back to the old *ad hoc* process where several unannounced consultative documents on proposed closures could be produced by officials at pre-agenda meetings. In his experience that method aroused total opposition. There was therefore a willingness amongst councillors at large to look at new ways of tackling roll decline. This view is supported by the ease with which the proposals of the working group were later accepted.

Mason portrayed the working group as informal, hard working and productive. This is in stark contrast to the later workings of area and regional groups. Educational arguments were to the fore and he felt that the group started to go along lines favoured by the Liberal Party. This presumably relates to the group's endorsement of consultation and devolution of some decision making to localities. He stated,

"I think I started to put forward that we should develop a system of dividing up the Region with each area told to look for problems."

Some members were unsympathetic but he observed that officials and Davidson were eventually won over. Whatever the source of the review group idea it was accepted as central to "Adapting to Change". It is likely that Mason promoted it eloquently and the acceptance was helped by the desire for a better rationalisation system as well as a wish to involve other political parties and interest groups in the messy business of closing schools.

From the above, several conclusions can be drawn. All indications were that, with a new mandate, a new leader and tacit government support, the time was right to act on falling school rolls. In the planning process there was a feeling of general confidence that action could succeed and that a range of people should be involved in seeking solutions. Some of this stemmed from the Region's experience of consultation in planning and community development issues during the previous decade. This wider involvement was not purely to increase pluralism but also to spread blame when inevitable difficulties were encountered. However, lack of a strong opposition and of strong professional leadership meant that issues were not fully explored at the

planning stage. A more partisan debate could have highlighted dangers. However all concerned saw the Adapting to Change procedures as reasonable and sensible if somewhat too 'Liberal' for a Region which had only a little experience of involving the electorate in decision making. The local tradition was of councillors being elected and of then tackling issues without a great deal of further consultation. Surprisingly, one of the authors of the report, Mason thought in retrospect that the Labour Party ought to have rejected "Adapting to Change". For him the Labour Party should have concluded that they were not Liberals and that the West of Scotland was not used to a devolved and consultative approach. In the event the planning stage was the smoothest part of the process with acrimony increasing as Adapting to Change developed.

(b) Area Review

At the beginning of the review stage another significant personality to emerge was Councillor Toppin who, who had retired from a distinguished career as a headteacher. Nonetheless Green, who clearly resented Toppin's elevation to the chair of the Regional Review Group, stressed that Toppin was quite junior within the Council. According to Gray, Toppin had ambitions to be Chairman of the Education Committee.

Green commented on Toppin's appointment *vis-à-vis* lines of responsibility. He was concerned about the intervention of the leader who was too involved with officials, but who did not have to face the public. Green felt Gray was basically interested in shutting schools. Green believed that councillors should keep a distance and not tell officers what to do. Further he stated that as political structures became fragmented control over the process was being lost. Green was not involved in direct political management of Adapting to Change and this meant splitting

responsibilities between himself as Chairman of Education and Toppin. Green did not like losing coordination. He stated that Toppin did not have the responsibility of the Education Chairman and increasingly the lines of responsibility began to fray.

This signalled Green's view of the councillor's role as more detached than some of his colleagues. He tended to take a more analytic view of the work of the Council in contrast to Gray's pragmatic approach. It is clear that Green saw Toppin as having power without responsibility in a department for which Green was ultimately responsible. For Green, the two senior officials of the department, who were preparing for retirement, were ineffective. In particular they had difficulties with the idea of varied solutions across the Region as was likely to arise from area review groups. Green was self critical, feeling he should have been more assertive, but he did suggest that Gray was new to the leadership and that this may have led to some lack of 'communication'. There was clearly a sense of unease between Gray and Green. Relationships seem to have been poor, with Green feeling that his authority was under attack. They also had different attitudes to officials, with Gray playing the political 'fixer' to Green's more conventional approach.

Overall, councillors had a negative view of the operation of Adapting to Change. Gray was happy about the consultation at the time but he felt the Council must not sacrifice the rights of the silent majority to the vociferous majority. He was concerned that closures should not only fall on those schools who could not mount effective protests. For him it was a dreadful mistake to fail to predict the reaction proposals would receive. Rationalisation plans were not welcomed in Council, though hostility

was kept within conventional limits. Outside the Council the hostility was much greater and in many cases was unpleasant. For Gray the consultation period, during which some members and officials were treated 'quite abominably', was the most difficult. This accords with evidence in earlier chapters. Councillors were often under great pressure in their localities and some feared personal political consequences. Gray stated that the leadership allowed them to speak against but not vote against closures. Overall discipline within the Party was maintained and this was crucial throughout the period under study. Without it fragmentation of the Labour Group would have been possible, leading to accusations of the Party being unfit to govern.

Internal pressures were also created by the make-up of area review groups. Green observed that they often had reluctant non-local chairpersons who found it difficult to work with local councillors who had already made up their minds on issues. Some chairs tried to guide the exercise but some could not, leading to unevenness of outcome. For Green the consultation was far too big to be controlled properly. Some groups got to the bottom of the issues but others accepted what interest groups said. Structure dictated that results would be patchy. While this lack of evenness was in-built, Green's comments convey the implication that the review group he served on tackled issues while other groups did not. Gray had been afraid that councillors in area A would threaten the chairman of area review group A (who was councillor for area B) that they would vote for school closures in area B if the chairman pressed for closures in area A. In the event Gray said that this rarely happened though he believed some chairmen started with the firm resolve not to close any schools. He too felt there had been unevenness across groups.

In contrast to Green's organisational concerns Gray feared 'understandings' being reached between councillors which would undermine the exercise. The differing concerns of the two councillors reflected their overall approaches.

Gray felt that the Council was over-generous in the consultation and were given no credit for their openness. This presumably refers to the fact that the Council could have closed schools with only the minimum legal consultation. Given the limited nature of the consultation and the fact that participants had little to gain and much to lose, this lack of gratitude is not surprising. Gray's concern extended to Green's personal role. He stated that some believed that Green was much more lenient on north west Glasgow than on other areas and took advantage of the fact that he knew a great deal about educational issues and about the form and content of consultation. The apparent lack of understanding (or perhaps distrust) between the two senior councillors involved in the issue did not bode well for the enterprise. However a certain amount of jockeying for position was to be expected in as large and politicised an organisation as Strathclyde. It is doubtful whether this materially affected the progress of Adapting to Change. The forces which made it so difficult to handle were inherent in the nature of the exercise.

Very quickly during the area review process things were going wrong. Senior councillors seem to have felt surprisingly remote from the issue.

The review process followed the lines set out in "Adapting to Change" very closely apart from the reduction of financial return to areas as the result of closures (see chapter 4). There was little controversy before the area review process began. This supports the view that tensions within

the Council were to a large extent due to the structure of Adapting to Change rather than the personalities of those involved. Two factors ensured problems. The education system was contracting; areas were presented with an agenda from which they could gain little but lose much. Further the process was so wide ranging and complex it was bound to be administratively difficult in the very short timescale allowed. Clearer lines of responsibility and stronger professional input would have improved the situation marginally but would have not cured much discontent. Discipline within the party was crucial, particularly when councillors were under local pressure. That it was largely maintained demonstrated the primacy of Party over locality in the the minds of the Labour councillors.

(c) Glasgow North West

Green and Mason were members of the Glasgow North West review group and therefore could offer a valuable insight into its workings. Both spoke in favourable terms of its operation though for Mason the idea of review groups meeting in public was ludicrous. This is understandable in view of the number of disgruntled parents attending but it is likely that private meetings would have aroused even more suspicion and hostility. Mason felt that his group was one of the few which picked up ideas from the Adapting to Change document and that other attempts at imaginative approaches were stifled by conservatism. Other reviews, for instance East Kilbride and Ayr, simply reported that there was no need for closures. For Mason the only area review group to approach Adapting to Change sensibly was Glasgow North West. He observed that Glasgow North West had an able calibre of councillor. In fact it seemed that Green and Mason (different political parties but similar occupational

backgrounds) had more mutual respect than existed between Gray and Green (both Labour but different backgrounds). They did not acknowledge the possibility that the 'devolution' approach had not sought converts but had been imposed on councillors who while not hostile, were nonetheless not convinced.

Green confirmed that the area was the biggest in the Region and did not have obvious community lines. The official involved produced a clever consultative document which proposed a number of closures which would be unacceptable even to the review group. Green felt that closures had to be put forward in areas where they would have been unlikely to go ahead in order to demonstrate fairness. However, early suggestions that some of the middle class schools might be vulnerable had provoked reactions which made these schools politically untouchable. A less sanguine interpretation, not offered by Green, is that if many schools were threatened then the middle class schools would successfully fight closure leaving the weak schools in the poorer areas to bear the brunt of cuts. As Mason stated, early threats to some middle class schools in effect made them 'untouchable'.

Both councillors' recollections of public meetings were instructive, illustrating that the labelling of Adapting to Change as extraordinary is justified. Green stated that at Knightswood and Victoria Drive meetings there was much antipathy almost leading to violence. The councillors reported, not surprisingly, that meetings were tame where schools did not feel threatened.

The councillors had, during the review process, decided which schools

were likely to close. There were two schools (Possilpark and St Columba of Iona) which in Mason's words 'did not work' i.e. they had an impoverished curriculum and poor attendance. However these had extremely deprived catchment areas and it is not clear how closure would improve overall attendance. Mason felt both would have to close. Taking into account the various problems of Possilpark (see chapter 5) and the idea of a community school proposed by local teachers, Possilpark was saved in what both Mason and Green felt was an interesting way. Mason in particular seemed comfortable with variation of provision with Green slightly less so. This contrasted with the suspicion within the wider Labour Party that different meant inequitable.

On the overall review Mason felt that the approach had been wrong. Rather than threatening schools he felt that questions could have been asked in a much more positive way, stressing opportunities rather than problems.

The above adds to the information presented in chapter 5 and raises three points. Minutes of meetings and newspaper reports did not reflect the intense pressure placed on councillors who had to address rowdy meetings in individual schools. Secondly, study of documentary sources conveys an impression of a much smoother process of decision making than is reflected in interviews. For instance, Possilpark, based on statistical criteria, would have been likely to close. However, a local group of professionals put forward a proposal which happened to appeal to influential councillors who were comfortable with non-standard solutions. Another area review group may well have simply recommended closure. Glasgow North West group used some of the ideas in "Adapting to Change" where other groups did not. Mason's

membership of the officer/ member working group gave him an interest in promoting its ideas. Thirdly, the review system adopted could only lead to patchy implementation. A central group of officers and members were keen on the ideas but the rest of the Council were unconvinced and unenthusiastic. Glasgow North West was dealt with leniently, when measured against "Adapting to Change" guidelines and compared with Paisley (see chapter 4 for figures). However compared with other areas such as East Kilbride its recommendations were severe.

(d) Regional Response and Aftermath

After the review group process all councillors agreed that the meetings of the Regional Review Group at Seamill and of the Labour Executive in January 1988 were crucial. Green recalled the Seamill meeting as having been the low point of the whole process. He stated that, as a scholar of Roman history he saw the failure of the lighting at the meeting as portentous of the difficulties to follow. For him it became clear that Gray had told Toppin that a certain number of schools had to close, based on statistical criteria. This indicated he felt that the decision making based on consultation had been abandoned. According to Green, Toppin reacted 'Aye Aye sir, three bags full sir' to Gray's instructions. Green clearly felt that Toppin was willing to carry out the instructions of the leader of the Council without question. Though he did not say so, he may well have felt that that was why Toppin was there in the first place. Mason felt that in time the Labour leadership decided to *appear* to implement the report but eventually Mason came to the conclusion that there was a 'hit list' much as Green had indicated.

Of the running of this crucial meeting, both councillors were very

critical. There had been no pre-Seamill meetings and the conduct of the business was a surprise. It seems that there was so much information provided and so many decisions to make that the meeting could not effectively proceed on an area by area basis. There was little continuity with chairs of review groups speaking one after another. Mason stated that education officers had expected to, but were not allowed to speak by Toppin. Green felt it was an 'utter shambles' which reflected badly on the Region and,

"It was so crassly stupid that when you begin to think over it again you wonder how on earth we could possibly have got into that."

Green said that he understood how Gray and Toppin got caught up in it as they could not cope with the amount of material. Green and Mason stated that Toppin started simply to propose closures of schools, which at first councillors went along with but then started to resist. The minutes of the meeting do show that councillors, led by Mason and Green, opposed a number of closures moved by Toppin. Given the discipline of the Labour Party this disunity outside the Party underlined the disquiet. On issues such as the closure of Notre Dame, Green and Mason fought for the area review group proposal to retain the school with councillor Toppin proposing closure. In that instance Toppin won. This process continued for two days and for Mason took away any integrity that was left in the project. Mason felt that Toppin was was beginning to be ridiculed by colleagues and was Gray's 'hatchet man'.

Following the Seamill meeting Gray took the proposals as far as the Labour executive. Here the contrast between Gray and Toppin became clear. Gray realised that opposition to closure proposals was too strong and he accepted modifications. On the other hand Toppin said that the

proposals were not negotiable. Gray's view was that Toppin had a long list of recommendations all of which he expected to be accepted. Gray felt that willingness to compromise was needed. He stated that at the Labour Executive, some insignificant proposals were lost and on the third proposal Toppin said that if it was not accepted he was 'finished'. It was not accepted and Toppin left the room abandoning Gray.

There is no hard evidence of the source of closure proposals. It does seem that Toppin, as a less experienced and less flexible councillor, was not able or willing to judge that many proposals were politically unsupportable. Gray on the other hand was prepared to back down. This would have been easier for Gray as the proposals were linked with Toppin in the eyes of the public. By the nature of his position Gray was expected to delegate, but he was able to use this power to put Davidson in a difficult position, to dis-empower Green and to have Toppin shoulder most of the blame for school closures.

The Regional Review Group stage was the focal point of Adapting to Change. The Council leadership's dilemma was serious. They needed to make certain cuts. They had devolved some influence over decision making but were unhappy with area recommendations as they were insufficient and uneven. The lack of pre-meeting agreements and the sheer bulk of printed information made the process unworkable. Attempts to discuss the full reports of twenty six area review groups without some sort of prior understanding of overall direction was to say the least ill advised. As in any form of large government a filtering process was necessary but in this case it had not been present. There was too much information and too many areas of contention to be

manageable.

Decisions made were politically unworkable and so many had to be reversed with face being lost and 'Choppin' Toppin', as he became to be known, becoming a scapegoat. The reversal of area recommendations meant that any notion of devolved decision making was lost. From the Labour Executive meeting onwards, things developed in a way which was acceptable to the majority of councillors. From then on, decisions were made in a pragmatic way with little regards to the guidance of "Adapting to Change".

(e) Interest Groups

In the interviews opinions were sought on the contributions of the Roman Catholic Church, the EIS and central government in order to promote understanding of the role of those outside the Council. (Further comment will be made on these groups in 6.4 below.)

The Roman Catholic Church came in for particular criticism from the councillors. Gray (himself a Catholic) stated that the Church's representatives on the Education Committee did not use fair means to protect schools. He did not expand on methods used by the Church representatives but he was clearly concerned about some of their public pronouncements which attacked Gray and the Council. He had two meetings with the Archbishop, and Gray stated that the Church was against change. He clearly felt that the Church's interests (as might be expected) were narrow focused on the retention of Catholic schools. The Church always referred to the 1918 Education (Scotland) Act[4] (which secured Roman Catholic state schools) but for Gray, its provisions were

not being challenged by the Council. The Church, he observed, was divided between a conservative group of Irish influenced Catholics (including many clergy) and the Scottish Catholics who realised that their community had moved on since 1918.

Gray felt that the Church wanted to do away with single sex schools but would not publicly admit it. Mason, who was involved in the campaign to save Notre Dame and was supportive of Our Lady and St Francis, was critical of the Archbishop's lack of support for these schools. He thought the Church dealt with Notre Dame very badly and considered the Archbishop to be a male chauvinist who was persuaded by priests that Our Lady and St Francis and Notre Dame should be closed for the sake of St Mungo's and St Thomas Aquinas. This reflected the importance attached by the clergy to the education of boys. The future of the Church depended on recruits to the priesthood and boys' education was therefore more important. Mason met with the Archbishop who though publicly was neutral on these cases, was basically on the side of closure. There is no doubt that the Church was one of the most elusive forces in Adapting to Change, with its position being hard to define at several points. It was in a unique position with formal and informal power and its role will be discussed below.

Of the teaching unions and in particular the EIS, Gray confirmed that it was able to mobilise considerable support within the Labour Party. When there was a crisis in education or social work, then delegates to the Strathclyde Labour Party Executive (which consisted of four members from each of 33 constituencies) tended to come from the department in crisis. During Adapting to Change a huge number of delegates were EIS

members and they tried to frighten councillors (presumably with withdrawal of political support). Of the EIS leadership Gray stated that he had a rapport with the previous EIS General Secretary (John Pollock) but felt his successor (Jim Martin) was led by the union rather than vice versa. The EIS wanted Adapting to Change abandoned but they subsequently moved from that position. He felt that the positions taken by teachers were primarily though not entirely motivated by self interest. For Gray, Strathclyde received no credit from teachers for concessions given. This presumably refers to the critical position taken by many teachers throughout Adapting to Change, which though it did not result in action, failed to acknowledge the continued protection given to them. The position of the unions will be further discussed below but again Gray seemed concerned at lack of recognition of the reasonableness of the Council.

In discussions on central government Gray stated that the Scottish Office had pointed to Strathclyde as a good example in dealing with declining rolls. He was extremely unhappy when Thatcher intervened, and thought that Rifkind had totally disagreed with the action. Rifkind, according to Gray, used the expression 'don't touch it with a barge pole, Strathclyde are doing a good job'. He readily conceded that there were understandings between Strathclyde and the Scottish Office on areas for public dispute. In his opinion this was less so with Rifkind than the previous Secretary of State. There was therefore an agreed set of issues over which central and local government could publicly argue (this was confirmed by Mason). This area of dispute left both parties to get on with their own layers of government. It helped that Rifkind and Forsyth did not get on very well because if they had, in his opinion, things would

have been extremely difficult for local government. Gray observed that the Secretary of State was helpful in relation to Adapting to Change, but Forsyth (of whom he clearly had a low opinion) created trouble and vilified Gray in the Commons in a personal way. In Adapting to Change the regional councillors indicated that central government had gone outside the 'restricted combat' area. In addition London had been involved and the impression was given that while interference from Edinburgh could be tolerated, that from London was much less acceptable.

The groups mentioned above all had power and influence which they used in different ways. The Church operated unpredictably and varied its approach depending on audience. The EIS chose to influence events from within the Labour Party and central government used political power gained from its parliamentary majority not feeling the need to consult or negotiate. These groups will be commented upon in 6.4 below giving consideration to the wider pressures on them.

In the view of the councillors interviewed there seems to be little credit attached to any group involved in Adapting to Change. It is clear from each of the sources that Adapting to Change affected the Council in a profound way and caused great personal anxiety for those involved. The optimism at the beginning waned and, with the reelection of a Conservative government in 1987, the future for Strathclyde started to look less certain. The affair called into question the Council's ability to tackle difficult, large scale issues. One councillor reflected the general view in stating that it produced incomparably more stress than the normal run of issues and further said that Adapting to Change was a

trauma for the whole Council and was terribly badly handled .

6.3 The Grassroots

The term 'grassroots' is used here to identify the groups who were to be affected in their everyday lives by Adapting to Change. This includes pupils, teachers and other school staff, and parents. In the years since 1979 the position of teachers in the education power process declined, particularly since the change of government led to successful attempts to reduce the power of the trades unions. Further, the promotion of consumer rights undermined the ability of professions to stand aloof from criticism and enquiry.[5] In contrast the power of the parents as consumers increased (to a limited extent) throughout the eighties.[6] In the period under consideration the main power parents had was under the 'parent's charter' giving parents the power to make placing requests for schools of their choice.[7] This resulted in steeper roll decline in unpopular schools than might have been expected taking into account demographic factors alone. However, the Scottish public had been traditionally unwilling to encroach on professional territory and hence the power of the teaching profession remained great. This was in contrast to England, as indicated by the high profile there of parents as governors and the willingness of parents to become involved in helping schools to 'opt out' of local authority control. The parts played by each group will be considered below. The discussion will focus on the marginalisation of pupils, the non-involvement of teachers and the campaigns mounted by parents. Evidence will be drawn from the review of documentary sources and interview materials.

(a) Pupils

Pupils are the most easily dealt with group. Pupils were the group who had most to gain or lose. The younger the children the more they were likely to be affected, but they were less likely to have maturity to understand the issues. However, evidence shows that pupils were involved in a limited number of ways.

Firstly they were used as examples. From cases such as the legal process instituted by Stanely Green to the newspaper advertisements run by Notre Dame, pupils were needed to highlight the potential effects of a school closure or to show why a school should be saved. Press coverage featured children and discussed what closure would mean to individual pupils. They were featured particularly in photographs of protests. Secondly, pupils became involved in the campaigns as letters writers and they swelled numbers at demonstrations. While buses were hired to take pupils to demonstrations there was no attempt to encourage direct action such as strikes or occupations. Thirdly, there was some evidence, in schools such as Notre Dame, of pupils becoming involved in more active ways in campaigns by forming independent campaign groups which addressed issues on behalf of pupils. Even in these latter cases, their tactics seemed to have copies of the methods of the adult campaign groups and while there is no evidence of the socioeconomic or academic status of the pupils involved they conducted a very middle class style of campaign. In Adapting to Change the last thing that schools which wanted to remain open would display was an angry or difficult school population. The only example of direct action by pupils was in phase 2 of Adapting to Change in an area of extreme deprivation. This was portrayed by the authorities as hooliganism. Overall, in almost all

campaign the pupils were on the periphery.

While the position of pupils was not the same as that of other participants, in that they could not have been expected to be given a full part in the review process, some consultation with pupils could have been in-built. There is no evidence that this was ever considered. This lack of a role for pupils in policy making is seen as so obvious it does not merit comment in most analyses. The Scottish system valued docility with any participation expected of pupils being of a peripheral, polite and easily ignored nature. In the promotion of the power of consumers by the Conservative government it was clear that the consumers of education were parents and employers, not pupils. In theoretical approaches from pluralism to corporatism pupils could be assumed to be non-citizens. This study would support that conclusion in that no other directly involved group was more marginal in the organisation of protest. Further their opinions were not considered in the Adapting to Change process in general.

(b) Teachers and Other School Staff

The limited involvement of teachers in Adapting to Change is more striking. While it has been acknowledged that teachers as a body had lost some power and influence over the previous decades, individually and collectively they had the organisational skills to have played a major role. Consideration will be given below to the teaching unions but the position of individual teachers at a local level is worthy of consideration.

The first and most important factor which affected their role was the fact that they were contracted to Strathclyde Regional Council and not a

particular school. During Adapting to Change the Region operated a 'no redundancy' policy. On 28th October 1987 the Education Committee accepted that a staffing policy should be developed which would ensure no dismissals as a result of closure or amalgamations, that salaries would be conserved, and that help would be available for those wishing early retirement. A complex series of procedures was designed which ensured that teachers were protected from detrimental personal effects. This was done well in advance of closure proposals and therefore gave early reassurance to teachers.

The result was that teachers in affected schools found themselves in one of three categories. The first comprised those who accepted early retirement. Many older members of staff took this option and were given favourable terms by the Region. A second category was that of unpromoted teachers who were offered a position in another school. Affected schools were often small, demoralised institutions in areas of deprivation. It was likely that a transfer would be to a more attractive school. Further, there was some choice of destination school. A third category consisted of those who held promoted posts and who did not wish to retire. In small secondary schools which had suffered roll decline these teachers were in the majority as prior transfers would have been of unpromoted staff. Such promoted teachers were automatically interviewed for posts in amalgamated schools; this in competition with the post holder of the other affected school. If unsuccessful, they would have their salaries conserved and receive automatic interview for equivalent posts which arose subsequently in the Region. The prospect was therefore one of transfer to a promoted post in a larger, more prestigious school, often with a larger salary. Undoubtedly staff were very

committed to the threatened schools but this loyalty was tempered by reasonably good personal prospects. Participation in anti-closure campaigns was further tempered by fears of disciplinary action from the Region which could follow if employees were openly critical of Strathclyde's policies.

Teachers did participate, in very small numbers, in area review groups but overturning of decisions by the Regional Review Group set most against that process. They did become involved in anti-closure campaigns but their participation tended to be in the background; in organisational and administrative tasks. They fought vigorously for the retention of some schools, (notably the Catholic girls schools) and produced strong written arguments against closure plans. While teachers clearly supported schools passionately parents took the lead in campaigns. In dealings with the media the parents' groups were always to the fore, which is interesting given the lack of enthusiasm Scottish education had had for parental involvement over the preceding century.

Headteachers were given some leeway in speaking out for their own schools but this was not wide. This brought into focus the divergence of view between the Council and headteachers on where loyalty was due. While loyalty to particular schools was valued by the Regional Council this loyalty did not give headteachers the right to openly oppose regional policy. Some, such as the Rector of Paisley Grammar, appealed to the heart of the Conservative Party against the decisions of their employers. This was certainly not viewed in a favourable light by councillors.[8]

Non teaching staff, who perhaps had more to fear from rationalisation than teachers, declined (on their union's advice) to take part in the

review process. They were the least powerful adults involved in Adapting to Change. By the nature of their posts they tended to be isolated in schools and as a result they were marginalised in the process taking little prominent part. Further, their Trades Unions would have had a legitimate interest in defending the jobs, terms and conditions of members but they would have not have been expected to have a central role in the educational aspects of the wider review process.

(c) Parents

In criticism of and protest against proposals parents took the central role. The vast amount of correspondence received by the Council suggests that a hierarchy of loyalties was in play for most parents. Not surprisingly at the top was concern for their own children, but this was followed by a loyalty to school, locality, and comprehensive education in descending order. There was little evidence of identification with Strathclyde Regional Council with much more emphasis being placed by protesters on the closures being caused by the Labour Party rather than the Region. There was a general acceptance of the school system with very little criticism of the quality or structure of education. While this must in part be due to the nature of the dispute, the level of contentment in Strathclyde seemed surprisingly high. As noted in earlier chapters there was very little criticism of 'enemy' schools by campaign groups, and where this did happen as in Paisley and Glasgow North West there was often a subsequent tempering or withdrawal of comments.

In Scotland, the West is the area most likely to produce public protest. The legacy of Red Clydeside[9] was active in the public imagination and a succession of industrial disputes such as the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders

occupation, and social protest such as the Dampness Campaigns which tackled housing issues continued a tradition of political protest. However, McLean argues that rather than being a regional phenomenon this political activism was specifically Glaswegian.[10] [11] In the above disputes the focus of discontent was located outside the West of Scotland. The traditional social campaign, while often directed at a local authority, was underpinned by the fact that ultimate control was held by central government. Local authorities would be targeted but ultimate wrath was reserved for central government whose underfunding was seen as the root of most problems.

This legacy provided tactics in Adapting to Change which were ineffective in influencing the local authority. The Labour Party could absorb protest from within the Labour and Trades Union movements and as has been seen above could modify proposals accordingly. In Adapting to Change the proposer of closures was the local authority. While accusations of underfunding could always be made against Westminster, it was difficult for the Council to use that argument as Strathclyde labelled the exercise as educationally, not financially driven. This added to pressure on the Labour Party and the Council and left them in an isolated and exposed position. It is argued here that traditional protest methods led to dilution of closure proposals in general but had much less effect in particular cases.

In the process of influence parents (in their role as parents) do not occupy a powerful position according to Ball.[12] Parents were not producer groups with power gained from working within the system, nor did they have a strong set of legally enforceable rights. Parents involved in

campaign groups who were politically active tended to have connections with the non Conservative parties. Traditional methods of campaigning were much in evidence as noted above. Letter writing campaigns, petitions, demonstrations and lobbying of councillors were common to most campaigning groups. In addition campaigners used their influence in trade union branches and at various levels within the Labour Party. It is apparent from documentation that Labour supporters were particularly active in groups and in one case a former Labour Lord Provost of Glasgow acted on behalf of a school group. While in many cases the Council was open to influence, particularly concerning deprived areas such as Possilpark, it was not so for schools such as Notre Dame and Paisley Grammar.

The obvious, if uncomfortable ally for groups was the Conservative Party. Approaching the Conservatives was not easy either politically or practically. There was no high profile opposition on the regional Council and few existing lines of communication between the campaign groups and the Party. In three particular schools the Conservatives were approached and became involved. In the case of Paisley Grammar the ability of the campaign group to get to the heart of the Conservative Party in London was the important factor, rather than the strength of their case in the eyes of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh. The personal intervention of the Prime Minister and the introduction of the '80% rule' saved Paisley Grammar and also, almost by accident saved Notre Dame. Notre Dame had also courted the Conservative Party, though through politicians in Edinburgh rather than London. In the third case, that of Our Lady and St Francis in the working class Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock Area, Conservative politicians had raised hopes of the possibility of

'opting out' of Strathclyde control but had not converted this into a reprieve.[13] This suggests that the government's enthusiasm for intervention was in proportion to the area's potential in political terms. In more affluent areas the saving of a school could lead to an increase in electoral fortunes and the undermining of Strathclyde's hold over education. It is likely that the Under Secretary would have favoured magnet schools which would have undermined the comprehensive nature of school provision. In poorer areas the political returns for intervention would have been much less.

6.4 Intermediate Organisations

A number of organisations outside the Council were concerned with the schools rationalisation plans. In this section the contributions of two of the most important contributors are discussed. These are the Roman Catholic Church And the EIS.

(a) The Roman Catholic Church.

One of the most interesting omissions in the recent analysis of Scottish educational policy making is the lack of attention given to the Roman Catholic Church.[14] This reflects the reluctance of those within Catholic education to be critical as the Church held formal and informal power over appointments. Further, Catholic education enjoyed the loyalty and commitment of those involved. There was also a reluctance from outside to examine the Catholic system due to lack of interest, lack of access and fear of critical interest appearing to be sectarian bias. In Adapting to Change the Church's position is noteworthy firstly because the fall in rolls affected the Roman Catholic sector disproportionately, secondly because of its unique statutory position and thirdly because it

became much more involved than any other 'intermediate' organisation.

The historical position of the community is important in informing on the stance taken by Catholics on education. Socially it had developed from its Catholic Irish roots to become an important force in Scottish life. The allegiance of Catholics was to the Labour Party, in part because of distrust of the Conservative's unionist position on Ireland. During the eighties the Church had become increasingly outspoken on social issues, often in tandem with the Church of Scotland (support of the teachers in their mid-eighties salaries dispute, Constitutional Convention, Ravenscraig etc.). This led Mrs Thatcher to see the Church as 'parroting the arguments of the left'.[15] This involvement in the broad anti-Conservative front gave the Church an increasingly central position in Scottish life and this it would not drop lightly. The Archbishop of Glasgow was the most powerful and outspoken of the clergy and while not extreme politically there was a centre/ left slant which placed the Church in the Scottish political mainstream. This reflected a growing confidence of the Catholic community to shake off an apologetic immigrant stance.

This above sat uneasily with a theological conservatism. The traditional Irish versus modern Scottish tension mentioned by Councillor Gray above was important. The desire to preserve separate schools was for traditionalists, central to the survival of Catholicism. The 1918 Education (Scotland) Act had a totemic significance for Scottish Catholics and its provisions would not be given up easily. The provision was privately opposed by sections of the Labour Party including some Catholic Labour Councillors. Rosie comments of the Archbishop of Glasgow,

"There is no doubt that one of his main aims in life is to defend Scotland's system of state-funded Roman Catholic schools..."[16]

The Church had the view that a) the Catholic character of the schools should not be diminished, b) they should not be so small and inefficient as to be seen as wasteful. The Hierarchy would rather have had one viable medium to large secondary which was Catholic than two or three small schools which were vulnerable to dilution of their Catholic character. As mentioned in chapter 2 single-sex Catholic schools had very wide catchment areas and caused problems for of sex imbalance in other schools. In addition, interview materials gathered for this thesis, point to a male chauvinism and unhappiness with the success of Catholic girls schools.[17] On the whole, and without further study, the position of the Church is hard to evaluate. Indications are that the Hierarchy made personal decisions for their sees on the basis of the interests of the Church and representations made by parents' groups. The Bishops' positions often seemed unclear, partly due to an unwillingness to say outright to a particular school that it did not have full support. There was a tendency to frame Church proposals as being 'in the best interest of the Catholic Community', implying that some schools would have to make sacrifices.

(b)Educational Institute of Scotland.

Of the teachers' organisations the EIS was by far the most important. In contrast to England, there was a degree of cooperation amongst Scottish teachers unions. The EIS had about 80% (45,000) of teachers as members (primary, secondary and further education) in the 1980's and claimed to be in relative terms Europe's strongest and most representative teachers' organisation.[18] The union held the great majority of seats on regional and

national negotiating bodies and while not militant was an extremely powerful force. Its members had strong links with the political parties. Of the 72 Scottish Members of Parliament in the mid eighties twenty one had been teachers or lecturers, and teachers were particularly common on the Labour benches.[19] During the eighties, rising unemployment and anti-union legislation had disproportionately affected the industrial unions. This left the EIS amongst the most powerful unions in the country due to a stable membership, continued employment of its members and an ability to win public sympathy. As with the Labour Party it was particularly strong in Strathclyde. There could have been no widespread concerted action on any issue without EIS support, even if the other unions were willing to proceed alone. As a 'producer' group it had access to decision making in education at various levels and had experience, expertise and paid staff to take on the Region or the government. The dual aims of the EIS were,

"to advance the cause of education and the interest and welfare of the scholastic profession in Scotland".[20]

Humes discusses the dilemmas posed by these twin aims and while most obvious at a national level this dichotomy of aims was apparent in the EIS approach to Adapting to Change. Humes feels that EIS's prime concern was for its members' interests. The stance taken in Adapting to Change confirms this. While it must be acknowledged that action was taken in the cases of individual schools (for instance EIS representatives threatened strike action and teachers at two schools, St Patrick's and Notre Dame High, Dumbarton walked out) but in union terms these were minor local skirmishes. The unions did not become heavily involved in Adapting to Change for two main reasons. The first was that the dispute did not directly threaten teachers' interests though it did test

loyalties to particular schools. If the EIS chose to launch a campaign against Adapting to Change the focus would have been on individual schools and communities rather than the interests of members. While it had been willing to become involved in general educational issues, the EIS had tended to reserve major campaigning to issues affecting members' pay and conditions. Following from the above, at the time of Adapting to Change the EIS and other teachers' organisations were engaged in a protracted salaries battle on a national scale and therefore distractions from Strathclyde were not desirable. In negotiations over salaries the regions were consistently more politically sympathetic and more generous than central government and so good local authority-EIS relations were important. However the union did apply significant pressure *within* the Labour Party, as detailed in the evidence from councillors. Politicians would have been well aware of the power of the union and it would have been unlikely that school closures and teacher redundancies would have been tackled at the same time. Opposition of unions and parents would have made Adapting to Change even more difficult for the Council.

6.5 The Directorate

It is necessary in this study to deal with the 'Directorate' as a group (see chapter 1 for the membership and structure of the Directorate). Their influence and input varied with personality and position, but study of the documentation showed a similarity of approach across review groups. Unlike schools, which were praised wherever possible by campaign groups, the Directorate were heavily criticised. Some parents believed the Directorate to be the ultimate decision makers in the Region. This was a view which some councillors did not refute when at

times they implied that closures were the work of officials rather than politicians. The Directorate were therefore seen as influential by the public as well as researchers cited in chapter 2.

Lawton sub-divides the powers of the DES into bureaucratic, political and professional.[21] It is argued here that, adapting Lawton's categories three, non-mutually exclusive, roles could be expected of the Directorate. In this study evidence has been sought demonstrating the balance of these. The first is that of expert educational administrators. The Directorate were the technicians of educational policy and practice and were trusted to make sense of the complexities of catchment areas, roll projections, teacher reallocation and accommodation use. The second is as political servants who carried out the will of the councillors and of the corporately managed Council. Lastly they could, as a group who were predominantly male ex-secondary teachers of academic subjects, be expected, amongst other things, to promote the interests of the educational establishment.[22] These roles will be considered in turn.

In Adapting to Change the position of 'expert' was particularly difficult. The Directorate were caught in the middle and controlled the flow of information. They were also the Region's contact persons and were available to all interest groups. Evidence shows that the officials had leeway in setting agendas and producing papers which directed debate. However, even this power was declining. Prior to 1986 officials could prepare a proposal for a school closure which councillors had little knowledge of. Adapting to Change opened the process to public scrutiny and therefore lessened the power of the Directorate .

Further, during the dispute, the Directorate's power was limited by three factors; professional loyalties, corporate restraint and the sheer volume of work generated by Adapting to Change. First their own professional culture restricted the range of options available. Measures would not be considered which went against that culture. For example there was strong teacher support for clear demarcation of subjects in secondary schools which it would have been administratively convenient to break down. However, erosion of this would have been unlikely, in part due to the background of the officers .

Secondly, Strathclyde did not favour creative non-traditional solutions. The forms of proposal for school closures and mergers were similar across the Region and there was a strong corporate identity which limited the power of individual officers. There was a clear division between the Directorate and the rest of the education service. The Directorate was seen as a body rather than a scattering of powerful independent officials. Evidence from the above interviews indicates that the Directorate, particularly in the latter part of the decade, were strongly controlled by a well established group of politicians.

Finally, Adapting to Change caused the Directorate an enormous amount of work and the evidence points to their inability to keep control of it. They were swamped by the weight of detail. Much of their work was carried out in front of an audience willing that mistakes be made. For example, legal action was taken against the Council in the case of Our Lady and St Francis Secondary School (Bridgeton/ Dalmarnock) on the grounds that consultation documents had not reached all parents. In an affidavit from one of the education officers this distribution was

discussed.

"This entailed an enormous amount of work for the whole of Glasgow Division and over the weekend of 13 and 14 February, all the documents were copied and lists prepared showing the categories of person to whom the documents should be issued."

Legal action was begun because eighteen girls were not given consultation documents in school. Over 2,000 such documents were issued in relation to that school. This experience of dealing with vast amounts of paperwork under considerable pressure was common within Adapting to Change. It is clear that the 'technical' role was one taken on by the Directorate. Subject to the constraints mentioned above they were expected to understand and explain the details of Adapting to Change. However the technical merged into their second role, that of political servants.

Strathclyde often promoted internal candidates and it was likely that officers would be comfortable working under a Labour administration. It was improbable that they would have to serve any other political party in Strathclyde. One view of Adapting to Change could be that an initial analysis was made that because of falling rolls some schools had to close. The political will was not there to sell this as a money saving exercise and so covering it in a cloak of educational 'expertise' would make the outcome more acceptable to the public. The Directorate had the task of producing the technical detail to justify closures. This was not a difficult task in its broadest sense though the preparation of statistics and papers was time consuming. The technical detail was used to give backing to the decisions which might have been made by the politicians on less informed grounds. Though this study does not show officers as totally

malleable, there is enough evidence of the professionals being willing to serve party interests to justify ascribing to them a political role. In the large amount of documentation examined there was no evidence of officials arguing strongly for a course of action not favoured by politicians. It is acknowledged that such documents may have been kept in closed files. However, there was material in files critical of Adapting to Change *after* it had been acknowledged, within the Council, as having gone badly wrong. The willingness of the Directorate to provide educational justifications for political turnarounds support ascription of the 'political' tag.

In terms of a 'leadership class' there is no evidence of officers forming part of an 'old boy' network which might have been expected if they were part of Humes' elite. On the contrary the Directorate were very inward looking, seeking advice and support within Strathclyde. Notably, this support was sought from politicians as well as colleagues. If a leadership class did exist it was a Strathclyde version which crossed the officer/member divide. An interesting contrast is with educational professionals within the civil service. In Strathclyde the education officers were involved in policy and resource issues which in central government would have involved input by a generalist, administrative layer. This administrative layer had a tradition of political detachment and frequent changes of isolated ministers. In Strathclyde there were long established councillors with many political colleagues to support them. Again this weakened the officers' educational role.

The Directorate therefore were an amalgam of educational technicians and political servants. This is not to denigrate their professionalism but

reflects their role in a politicised and contracting situation, and of course the nature of the dispute. Officer/member groups such as the one which wrote "Adapting to Change" were part of the process of erosion of professional power. There seems to have been a close working relationship between some councillors and officials leading to a 'blurring of the edges' of the political versus the educational. In a Council as large as Strathclyde senior politicians tended to be able, experienced and well educated and unlikely to accept educational smokescreens. Their power and influence over policy was therefore very high.

6.6 Councillors

Adapting to Change has been considered from the points of view of some senior councillors. Here it is important to locate councillors in general in the overall picture both as a group and as individuals.

As a group the power of politicians was enhanced by three factors. These were regionalisation, strong politicisation and good party discipline. In writings on the early post-war period, there was much evidence of officer domination. Regionalisation lessened this as the Council grew larger and more prominent with an increasingly corporate image. Councillors represented large areas and were prominent in communities. There was also a high degree of adherence to national and local party policies. The central political tenets of the councillors were clear and unambiguous leaving limited room for 'fudging'. In particular, commitment to provision in the most deprived areas overrode other considerations which officials may have wished to introduce. Strong links were evident to the national Party administration, to Members of Parliament and to the wider Labour movement. Those not involved at

the heart of the Party faced demands from constituents, trades unions, parents' groups and others to oppose closures. Opportunities for opposition were given in Party meetings but councillors were expected to voice contrary opinions in private, not in the Regional Chambers. Division was present within the Party mainly between left and right wings.[23] Bargains were made and opposition hatched without the need for help from the Opposition. Public and political opposition did materialise and led to a series of compromises *within* the Labour Party.

Individually many of the councillors were professionally involved in education, or were retired from senior teaching posts[24] providing a pool of educational expertise. Strathclyde Labour MP's commonly came from the ranks of councillors and 32 of the 72 Scottish MP's, including all Scottish Office Ministers had been local councillors at one time.[25] There was a tendency for a group of councillors to succeed to parliamentary constituencies at each general election. While becoming an MP was no guarantee of quality it did indicate involvement and ambition. In addition senior councillors were almost 'professional' politicians in that they were either retired, unemployed or had cooperative employers who granted generous leave of absence. They were also heavily involved on the Scottish, and UK stage, particularly in their involvement in the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. There was therefore a strong centralised force in the Region. It was open to influence from outside but this tended to be filtered through local members. It is argued here that while protests were vociferous parents themselves did not have any real power. The only strong external check on power was central government. Their role is discussed below.

6.7 Central Government

For the purposes of this study 'Central Government' denotes the politicians and civil servants in London and Edinburgh who took an interest in Strathclyde schools. On the basis of available evidence it is remarkable how little involvement the Scottish Education Department had in Adapting to Change. This reflected the fact, as noted by Adler, that the SED had never taken a lead on the issue of falling school rolls and unlike the DES it had issued no guidelines to local authorities.[26] Edinburgh civil servants' involvement was restricted to three small areas. First they acted on behalf of the politicians by advising on political intervention and organising visits to selected schools. Secondly they responded to direct approaches by protest groups and individuals. This was particularly the case in the periods when closure decisions had been made by the Region. During this period decisions went to the Secretary of State for final ratification or appeals were made on 'non-referred' closures (i.e. closures not covered by the '80% rule or the Church's right of appeal). Thirdly the civil servants gave opinions on points of law and administration particularly concerning the '80% rule' and the conduct of statutory consultations on school closures. Evidence on the workings of the Scottish Office accord with Humes when he states that,

> "Detailed evidence of the internal workings of the SED is hard to come by. Officials are constrained both formally, by their conditions of employment, and informally, by the bureaucratic ethos which they inhabit, from giving detailed information to outsiders about the conduct of business within the department."[27]

While this study concentrates on a local educational debate it does confirm some of the observations, reported by Humes, on the Scottish

Office's involvement in education. He comments,

"In previous studies of Scottish education there has often been a tendency to regard the SED as some sort of autonomous agency, cut off from the vulgar world of political dealing."[28]

It seems strange that in a dispute as 'dirty' as Adapting to Change the civil servants managed to remain so detached. This reflected a 'hands off' approach in a similar dispute in Lothian Region and is a reflection of the tacit support of the Scottish Office for the school closure programme.[29] Civil servants maintained the government line of tacitly supporting Strathclyde seeing little point in intervening.

As has been demonstrated in previous chapters the politicians were much more actively involved. Later comments on the affair, particularly from the Prime Minister in her memoirs were instructive in confirming tensions which had been the subject of speculation. A major factor in the central government involvement was the interplay of the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State. Both were committed to the reduction of public expenditure and overcapacity in Scottish schools. Strathclyde had been praised by the Secretary of State for tackling the problem where other rightward leaning councils had done little. The intervention of politicians reflected the interplay of personality and policy and tensions within the Conservative Party. The new Secretary of State, appointed in 1986, was more in sympathy with Scottish education than many previous incumbents. He had been educated in Scotland both at school and university level and had acted as legal counsel to the EIS. His approach tended to be non-confrontational and he was seen as a barrier to the introduction of Thatcherite policies. On the other hand, the

Under Secretary (also educated in Scotland) was on the right of the Conservative Party and saw the education system as being in need of major revision. The former Prime Minister wrote of the two men,

"The real powerhouse for Thatcherism at the Scottish Office was Michael Forsyth, whom I appointed a parliamentary under secretary in 1987, with responsibility for Scottish Education and health. When George Younger (who for all his decency and common sense was very much of the paternalist school of Scottish Tory politicians) left the Scottish Office in 1986 to become defence secretary, Malcolm Rifkind was the heir apparent. But I appointed him with mixed feelings. He had been a passionate supporter of Scottish devolution when we were in opposition. He was one of the party's most brilliant and persuasive debaters. No one could doubt his intellect or his grasp of ideas. Unfortunately he was as sensitive and highly strung as he was eloquent. His judgment was erratic and his behaviour unpredictable. Nor did he implement the radical Thatcherite approach he publicly espoused; for espouse it he certainly did. After the 1987 election he made speeches up and down Scotland attacking dependency and extolling enterprise. But as political pressures mounted he changed his tune.

It was Michael, Brian Griffiths [head of Thatcher's policy unit] and I who were convinced of the need to intervene to protect Paisley grammar school- a popular school of high academic standards and traditional ethos - which (doubtless for these very reasons) the socialist Strathclyde Council wanted to close.

I saw this as a test case. We must show that we were not prepared to see the Scottish left wing establishment lord it over the people it was our duty to protect. I sent a personal minute to Rifkind on Friday, January 22, 1988, registering the strength of my views. As a result of my intervention, regulations were laid so that where a Scottish education authority proposed to close, change the site or vary the catchment area of any school where the number of pupils at the school was greater than 80% of its capacity, the proposal should be referred to the Scottish secretary."[30]

The radical/ conservative tension within the Conservative Party in Scotland, compounded by personalities, was at the heart of the issue. Jones comments,

'...the special relationship which developed between Forsyth and Thatcher, bypassing Rifkind, was disastrous for the Scottish Office. Ministers became a disunited team with policy the football in a struggle for supremacy."[31]

For the radicals, the political temptations presented by Adapting to Change were difficult to resist. Although the Conservatives had made little electoral impact in the West of Scotland, Adapting to Change offered three opportunities. The first was the chance to embarrass the Regional Council and portray it as the perpetrator of cuts with government politicians seen as fair minded interventionists. Secondly, the schools the government supported appealed to parents who, if the Conservatives were ever to become a political force in the West of Scotland, would have to be won over. Thirdly, the issue gave the Under Secretary an opportunity to show himself as a champion of the right, cracking the cooperative mould in education. The raft of reforms promoted by the Under Secretary, many of which if implemented would bring Scotland more into line with England, had not appealed to the public. School boards, national tests etc. were all fiercely criticised and received little support from (even Conservative) parents. Further, the reforms did not have the full backing of the Secretary of State. For instance on the introduction of 'opt out' legislation the former Prime Minister wrote,

"Yet Rifkind resisted this. After receiving advice from the parliamentary business managers about the pressures on the legislative timetable, I reluctantly agreed that opting out provisions should not be included in his first Education bill. Malcolm claimed that there was not sufficient demand for opting out in Scotland. However from my postbag and Griffith's enquiries, I knew otherwise.

I insisted and had my way. In 1989 legislation was accordingly introduced to bring the opportunities of grant-maintained schools to Scotland."[32]

This portrayal of the Under Secretary as the champion of Thatcherism is one which accords with the views of both the right and left. What does

not come across in the former Prime Minister's account was his unpopularity. First his espousal of radical Thatcherite policies found little favour within the Scottish Conservative Party and less outside it. Second his personality made few friends and Strathclyde politicians normally prepared to cooperate with government would have little to do with him.

Parents' groups courted the Conservatives to save their own schools but campaign material indicates they were uncomfortable with it. In the event the Conservatives gained little political capital. [33]

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has considered evidence from interviews and documentation, which identify the background of and limits to various parties' involvement in Adapting to Change. The evidence of senior councillors sheds light on the internal difficulties of the Council in terms of the more 'personal' level of politics. It demonstrates divergence of approach to dealing with officials and points to the different needs which can be satisfied by decisions. This is shown, for example, in the appointment of councillors to posts of responsibility. However, it is argued the planning of Adapting to Change led to the problems faced by the Council and that internal disagreements were results, rather than causes of the difficulties.

In addition the chapter has identified the limited role played by pupils which marginalised any contributions they might have made. Furthermore teachers were not involved in a substantial way due to the ability of the EIS to protect their interests. This was in part due to the unwillingness of the Council to upset both parents and teachers and to

the EIS's involvement in a major national salaries campaign.

This left parents to become the major force against closure proposals. Various tactics were adopted by parents groups, the least successful being the traditional protest methods of the West of Scotland. As is argued elsewhere in this thesis, the most successful routes to the reversal of closure decisions were either appeals to the government or to the Region's positive discrimination policy. The marginalisation of the Directorate has been explored which, while it reflected the nature of the issue, was indicative of a declining educational influence and increased politicisation of officers. Lastly, the contribution of central government was highlighted and here, unlike amongst councillors, individual personality was important. In particular, the Under Secretary responsible for education seems to have had the willingness and drive to challenge the consensual approach taken by his colleagues. In this he carried the style of the government into a part of the United Kingdom which was unwilling to adopt Thatcherite ideas.

Without some understanding of the pressures and restrictions on the participants, a full understanding of Adapting to Change could not be reached. The next chapter will consider the above evidence, and that from chapters 4 and 5 in relation to the theoretical perspective adopted in chapter 2. It will adapt and revise this perspective in the light of the evidence presented above.

[1] Ball (1990), Heclo and Wildavsky (1973), Kogan (1971),Kogan (1975), McPherson and Raab (1988) ops. cit.

[2] Raab, C. (1991) in *Scottish Educational Review*, vol. 23, no.2, Nov. 1991,p. 119.

[3] Op. cit. p. 53.

[4] Education (Scotland) Act 1918.

[5] Adler, Petch and Tweedie (1989), op. cit., ch. 2.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] A front page report in the *Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)* (1 Jul. 1988) considered at some length why at the retiral of the Rector, Mr Andrew Corbett no senior Strathclyde official or councillor was available to attend. Mr Andrew Neil, the editor of the *Sunday Times* did however manage. Councillor Gray was reported as describing Mr Corbett as a 'sweetie wifie' (Scots: a person given to constant, frivolous chatter).

[9] McLean, I. (1983) *The Legend of Red Clydeside*, (Edinburgh, John Donald), p. 2.

[10] Op. cit.

[11] see Bryant, R. (1979) *The Dampness Monster*, (Edinburgh, Scottish Council of Social Service) and Bryant, B. and Bryant, R. (1982) *Change and Conflict: A Study of Community Work in Glasgow*, (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press).

[12] Ball (1990), op. cit.

[13] Taped interview with Councillor Mason.

[14] See Fitzpatrick, T. (1986) *Catholic Secondary Education in South West Scotland before 1972*, (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press).

[15] Thatcher, M. (1993) *The Downing Street Years*, (London, Harper Collins).p.619.

[16] Rosie, G. (1992) *'Religion'* in M. Linklater and A. Dennison, *Anatomy of Scotland: How Scotland Works*, (Edinburgh, Chambers), p. 95.

[17] Interview with J. Mclean,teachers' representative on the Education Committee.

[18] Educational Institute of Scotland (1983) *Members Bulletin 8/83.*

[19] Parry, R. (1988), op. cit.

[20] Educational Institute of Scotland (Nov. 1982) *Constitution, Royal Charter and Rules*, Para 1 Nov. 1982.

[21] Lawton, D. (1986) 'The Department of Education and Science: Policy Making at the Centre' in Hartnett, A. and Naish, M. (eds.) *Education and Society Today*, (Lewes, Falmer Press).

[22] In fact with a change of director the Education Department started to actively recruit non-white, non-male, non-secondary teachers.

[23] For discussion of these divisions see Wainwright, H. (1987)*Labour: A Tale of Two Parties*, (London, Hogarth), in particular pp. 144-152.

[24] Serving employees could not stand as councillors but university lecturers, retired teachers and those employed by other authorities were eligible.

[25] Parry (1988), op. cit.

[26] Adler (1985), op. cit., p. 1.

[27] Parry (1988),op. cit., p. 51.

[28] Op. cit., p. 38

[29] Campbell (1987) op. cit.

[30] Thatcher(1993), op. cit.

[31] Jones, P. (1992) 'The Scottish Office', in M. Linklater and R. Denniston (eds.), *Anatomy of Scotland*, (Edinburgh , Chambers, 1992).

[32] Ibid.

[33] In the early 90's an 'Opting Out' ballot was arranged for Paisley Grammar. Parents overwhelmingly rejected the proposal.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will attempt to use the evidence gained from study of Adapting to Change to contribute to the understanding of educational policy making in a contracting system. It will relate to the aims set out in the introduction and expanded upon in chapter 2. The evidence described in previous chapters will form the basis against which the theoretical positions examined in chapter 2 will be measured. The issue studied concerns the provision and withdrawal of services, and conclusions are limited by that base. However, in a contracting system, reduction of provision is the key feature and understanding of the issues arising from this reduction is essential. It has been asserted above that the Scottish system offers useful variants which help illuminate the wider UK system and further that it is important to develop the revisionist theories of Scottish education which expanded throughout the eighties. It is hoped that this chapter will be useful in both of these areas.

In particular this chapter sets out to do three things. The first is to use the concepts of pluralism, centralism and corporatism and apply them, in the light of Adapting to Change, to power in Scottish education and local government. These concepts have been used by writers on education policy and have proved useful tools in the evaluation of different types of educational policy making. The second is to look at the conclusions of Humes and of McPherson and Raab and to reconsider them in the light of the evidence from Adapting to Change. The third is to consider the Strathclyde public's rejection of Conservative ideas and how this affected Adapting to Change. It also explores how the different legitimacy of

central and local government affected their relative abilities to promote change.

Before discussing these issues it is useful to note the findings of the consultants from the Institute of Local Government Studies, Birmingham (INLOGOV), commissioned by Strathclyde to look into the management of the Education Department.[1] Though they were made after the end of phase 1 of Adapting to Change it is interesting to consider the recommendations of the consultants, particularly as they were broadly accepted by Strathclyde.[2] The report emphasised that the main challenge facing the Department was to move from an over-emphasis on detailed administration to an active role in managing the service. It recommended that the Department clarify values and policy processes, develop the process of management, design an appropriate organisation and introduce systematic monitoring and evaluation. It stated that the organisation suffered from absence of strategic management, a confused and over-elaborate bureaucracy and a lack of responsiveness. Remedies proposed were the establishment of a function of strategic management at headquarters and of a tier of operational management at divisional level. It was recommended that the Department clarify the relationship between headquarters and divisions and strengthen the role of smaller areas and individual institutions.

The report emphasised that a clear distinction should be drawn between strategic and operational tasks and commented that the size and diversity of the Region together with good management practice made it inadvisable for the operational management of the service to be centralised at headquarters. The consultants suggested that the setting up

of a strategy committee should be considered in the future and interestingly that the Department needed capacity for research and information as part of the policy making process. It is difficult to relate the conclusions of the INLOGOV report to the findings of this study in that they recommend what the Department *ought* to do, not what it did do in subsequent years. Following INLOGOV the Department began to move towards more centralised policy making and more devolved management. If the centralised policy making role is developed as envisaged (particularly if backed up by a more effective, centralised research capacity), then the tendency for more power to be located in headquarters would be enhanced. If however the operational devolution involves a significant relocation of power to the sub-regions then the tendency would be towards a decentralisation of power. Devolution of professional power without devolution of political power (for example to local sub-committees) could considerably enhance the power of the Directorate. Study of the post-INLOGOV politics and administration of Strathclyde would be necessary before conclusions were reached on these issues.

7.2 Power Sharing?

Chapter 2 noted that the categories of power used here can be used in a descriptive or prescriptive manner. Here they will be used to describe the system in operation as demonstrated by the schools closure programme. Adapting to Change was a single issue and it cannot be claimed that conclusions drawn can be extended to Scottish educational policy making in general. They will be of most use as a reference point in considering highly political issues in education. They are nonetheless of wider value because as Raab states,

"...the critical scrutiny of the actions, inactions and relationships of the leading figures and the main institutions is sadly underdeveloped in Scotland."[3]

The theoretical implications of this will be considered below taking into account evidence of pluralism, centralism and corporatism in the Adapting to Change programme. Examination of Adapting to Change lends weight to the observation of Dunleavy and O'Leary that,

"As ingenious variations within each theory of the state have multiplied, so the complete refutation of any approach becomes difficult to envisage, especially as theories now extensively overlap each other."[4]

In this study account has been taken of Dunleavy and O'Leary's claim that two central perspectives (pluralism and elite theory) make all other theories cohere. The focus on pluralism and the corporatist strain of elite theories has proved particularly useful in the study of a publicly provided education service.[5] In particular pluralism and elite theory employ an inductive approach to theory building and provide useful benchmarks in a study of this kind.[6]

(a) Pluralism

In all cases except that of total dictatorship there is some plurality of influence. The task of analysis is to make judgments based on the available evidence as to how important or extensive that plurality has been. Partnership and pluralism imply some interaction amongst a number of political and social groups. This interaction results in an adjustment in policy based on the discourse between various points of view. The definition of pluralism given in chapter 2 requires that the

exercise of power is not in the hands of one social or political grouping. It points to conflict, bargaining and compromise among a 'shifting plurality of political and social groups'.

It is conceded that the area review group approach was an (very small) attempt to diversify influence over policy. The overturning of proposals from area review groups and public condemnation of Adapting to Change by members of review groups shows that this failed. This failure reflects partly on the nature of the non-pluralist political inheritance of the West of Scotland but more importantly on the weak power base available to the teachers and parents who became involved. It is apparent that the above-mentioned limited involvement was designed to help legitimate the review process. Even if it had succeeded it would have not demonstrated a plurality of influence. The area review involvement did not have a major overall bearing and so references below to debate and protest will refer to events outside the area review groups.

In Adapting to Change there was conflict and a debate which altered outcomes but it is important to differentiate between influences within (the 'inside track') and outside the Labour Party. What constitutes the inside track is not only the use of the formal mechanisms of Party structure but the creation of political pressure from areas of the broader Labour, trade union and community movement. Many of the individuals active in community groups and trades unions were also active within the Labour Party and formed a network of internal influence. In Adapting to Change, the EIS and representatives of community groups in the most deprived areas used this inside track to great effect. The support of the Council for the most deprived

communities such as Possilpark and Merksworth was not present simply as a result of parental pressure. The Council found the combined representations of the people of the areas backed by local professionals (community workers/ social workers and local teachers), hard to resist. Councillors were also ideologically predisposed towards such groups. The professionals, as 'producer' groups, were able to use their inside knowledge of Council and Party procedures and had access to information and to councillors. The combination of professional knowledge, the extreme deprivation of the areas and the concerns of local people secured the future of the schools. This, however, does not constitute pluralism as it does not involve a plurality of social and political groups. The route resembles more the operation of a local State in which manoeuvres are made from within in order to gain advantage.

Outside the Labour movement there is little evidence of pluralism. There was widespread public protest when closure plans were announced in the winter of 1987/88. Even so, sheer protest, while it may lead to moderation of proposals does not constitute pluralism. Protests were vigorous and well supported but the efforts of school-support groups were fragmented. Dunleavy and O'Leary state that social crises may arise if there are weak pressure groups and a centralised state. They observe that,

"The stabilization of existing inequalities, especially the exclusion of unorganised interests from policy-making, is undemocratic and can result in the freezing and stagnation of social and economic relations."[7]

One of the major criticisms of pluralist theories is their difficulty in accounting for the differences in the political influence of groups and

individuals, and as has been noted in Strathclyde there were marked differences in the power of different pressure groups. There were attempts to unite campaigns in local and regional groupings but these provided only weak centres of influence. Federated groups were ineffectual, firstly because of their late formation and secondly due to the competing claims between schools. If there had been a strong federation of parents' groups which the Region consulted as a matter of course than this would have pointed to a pluralistic structure. There was no evidence of such influence at regional level, nor did the authority concern itself with parents' groups at school level. This lack of ability of parents' groups to mobilise regionally reflects the weakness of parents within Scottish education (there were parents' organisations, but these did not have a high profile). Protest groups had no existing, strong network to ease federation. In the West of Scotland tradition, the network which could have been used was the Labour movement but this was already mobilised on the other side. The second weakness of federated groups, that of in-fighting, was exemplified by Paisley. The arguments of groups usually competed against each other and so there was not the firm leadership, clear policy or solidarity to produce a powerful force. It will be argued below that professionals were part of the political process and that the EIS and the Roman Catholic Church were more or less incorporated into political structures (the Church and the EIS having influence limited to guarding their own narrow interests). Lastly central government, while obviously powerful, was not involved in 'bargaining and compromise' with various groups. London's use of power was much too naked to be seen as part of a pluralist picture. Of liberal approaches such as pluralism, Dunleavy and O'Leary comment that they often lose any detailed view of the wider society in which citizens are located, and the extent to which

their social and economic positions shape their political choices, interests and potentialities.[8] Further, they state that,

"The inventory of propagandistic, manipulative and coercive strategies used by state officials who wish to undertake autonomous action is enormous, especially the range of 'divide and rule' strategies which are uniquely available to governing elites." [9]

In the case of Adapting to Change the inequalities in power of different the parties involved was apparent. Both central and local government were selective in the groups they responded to. Kogan has argued that,

"... the educational service is unusually complex and plural, not only because of the number of stakeholders operating at any one level, but also because of the many levels where there are political inputs and authorities with high levels of discretion, and that in consequence there is no single interest, political or bureaucratic, that can be defined and aggregated." [10]

However, in Adapting to Change, while many groups and individuals had access to the policy making process, substantial interests were excluded and those in power were able to select the groups they wished to favour. It is therefore argued that Adapting to Change did not exemplify significant pluralism over power and policy.

(b) Centralism

All pluralists are hostile to centralised states. The meanings of centralisation are disputed but pluralists view decentralisation as a virtue.[11] For pluralists decentralisation helps counter the emergence of 'democratic despotism' and gives many points of access to the institutions of various levels of government. Pluralists are particularly hostile to unitary systems where sovereignty is located in a single body. Dunleavy

and O'Leary argue that this is a particular danger in societies with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations. In Scotland there was significant evidence (particularly electoral) in the era of Adapting to Change of a drift from the current values of central government which could promote a constitutional crisis. This will be returned to below.

The evidence from Adapting to Change supports Ashford's identification of the problems of the constitution in relation to local government as discussed in chapter 2. The reluctance of sections of the Conservative Party to keep away from a contentious local government issue emphasises this. Questions such as; why have a system of local democracy if Westminster overrules decisions it does not like?; why not simply make local officials civil servants and run the whole thing centrally? could have been, but were not, asked by the Right. All parties saw some (varying) place for local government.

Central government intervention highlighted two things. First, it demonstrated the ease with which local authorities could have their decisions overturned by Westminster, no matter how strong their popular mandate. If, as argued above, Adapting to Change did not show evidence of pluralism did this indicate that centralism was in operation?

Two centralising forces were apparent. The first was the great power held by a small (not necessarily united) group of Regional councillors, comprising the Leader of the Council and chairmen of important committees, who were unchallenged by a strong opposition or a vigorous Directorate. This group were vulnerable only to pressures from within the Labour movement and were far more likely to be removed by

internal coups than by election reversals.

The other great force was that of central government, particularly in London. The evidence presented confirms the centralising tendencies throughout the eighties Britain, as described in chapter 2. In the present case the imposition of financial restraints and the increasing inability of of the Region to raise revenue is in accord with the wide range of writers who point to increasing centralism in eighties Britain.[12] The financial squeeze combined with the effects of the Parents' Charter severely restricted the room for manoeuvre held by Strathclyde. However, it is argued that Adapting to Change was conducted outside this common set of limitations. It was a Strathclyde initiative which appealed to the public on educational grounds. The Council chose to present it as not financially motivated or forced by government. While it is clear that government policy was a precipitating factor this issue was unique in demonstrating Strathclyde's powers over its own services. The dispute is, as a result, more instructive as it opens the power of the Region to examination.

There is some difficulty of clear delineation of the central government as it had feet in both Edinburgh and London. For present purposes the London part of central government will be seen as those around the political axis of the Prime Minister and the Scottish Under Secretary, Michael Forsyth. The Edinburgh part includes the Scottish Office and the Secretary of State for Scotland. It is clear that the impetus for intervention came from the London 'leg' and interesting that London felt frustrated enough with the lack of zeal for Thatcherite ideas in Edinburgh to send the head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, Professor Brian Griffiths, to speak to parents in the east end of Glasgow about opting out of local

authority control.

The adherence to cooperation and the rejection of the ideals of the New Right was so strong in Scotland that London and Glasgow were operating in different ideological worlds. The ease with which Westminster was able to intervene with the '80% rule' was a salutary reminder of the vulnerability of local government and of the political power of Westminster.

These two factors make a simple description of a central tendency of power inadequate. Rather, there was a duopoly of power with two distinct loci; Glasgow and Westminster. Westminster had ultimate power but that aside Strathclyde had great freedom of action. This 'dual locus' approach is further supported by the lack of communication between the two centres. In fact London would probably not have become involved if it were not for the interest of the Under Secretary who had access to the Prime Minister. Missing from this analysis is the Scottish Office. It is argued here that the Scottish Office (and the Secretary of State) had little impact on the issue. This accords with Midwinter and Page's view that while the Scottish Office was happy to be involved in overall decision-making it showed a reluctance (and lack of capacity) to influence particular local authorities.[13] No other problem of eighties education needed national direction more, yet the Scottish Office chose to keep well away from it. All the indications were that Edinburgh was happy that Strathclyde was tackling falling school rolls. Edinburgh did not attempt to use the situation to undermine the role of local government. This reflects not only the mutual dependence of the Scottish Office and local authorities but also a self-preserving desire to not be implicated in

closures and the lack of Thatcherite zeal in Edinburgh. Changes resulting from the 1980 Education (Scotland) Act had devolved responsibility for school closures to the regions and this important decision was revised by outside diktat over a period of a few days. The power of the Scottish Office had been increasing, particularly in the area of curriculum and assessment, but on the most political issues (as with comprehensivisation in the sixties) it could be totally overruled.

(c) Corporatism: The Church and the EIS

Adapting to Change demonstrated a small move towards a more pluralist approach to policy making and it has been argued that this failed. The failure was much to do with the issue involved and it would be more likely that a spreading of decision making would be more successful in times of expansion. Hood and Wright comment of government in 'hard times',

"The management of interest groups may become politically trickier: a government with more to spend year by year will not lack for friends and counsellors, whereas a government with less to spend may find itself in a lonelier position. Hard times provide a good test-bed for theories of corporatism and pressure group government."[14]

This last prediction proved to be true. From the argument above for a 'two centre centralism' it follows that a form of corporatism could exist at each of these levels. Schmitter's criteria for corporatism (set out in chapter 2) were that incorporated bodies should be organised, compulsory, non-competitive, licensed with a representative monopoly and exerting discipline on their members.[15] The Roman Catholic Church and the EIS fulfilled most of these criteria. The Church had a representational monopoly at both a local and national level. It had formal power in its

rights of appeal and consultation on closures at a national level and in its representation on Strathclyde's Education Committee. Further, it had influence within the Catholic education system enshrined in law. Informally the Hierarchy (for the incorporation was specifically of the Hierarchy) had privileged access to local and national politicians and was consulted throughout Adapting to Change. Additionally, as discussed in chapter 6, the Church was increasingly becoming part of the mainstream of Scottish political life. There were tensions, and some distrust, both of the Labour Party and of Scottish Office ministers, but there is enough evidence to describe the Church as a loosely incorporated body.

The EIS clearly had privileged access at Strathclyde level and demonstrated the ease with which it could protect its members' interests. Because it essentially gained satisfaction from Strathclyde it did not have to have dealings with the Scottish Office and so there is no evidence from Adapting to Change to point to EIS incorporation at a national level. However, over the eighties there had been an increasing tendency for the EIS to be excluded from the centres of power. Reduction of union representatives on national educational bodies and large scale industrial action point to little incorporation, though further inquiry would be needed to confirm this. The EIS remained, however, a powerful force in Scottish education. More research is needed to identify the nature and extent of its power in issues outside the area of pay and conditions.

7.3 Adapting to Change and Education Policy in Scotland

(a) Power and Influence Within the System

Many of the predictions of writers on problems which would arise from contraction proved true in areas of the curriculum, staff surpluses

and competition between schools.[16] In Strathclyde there was less evidence of the benefits of contraction apart from the improvement in space availability in schools. However, what was not evident was an ability of central or local government to make major cuts. Kogan describes key features which distinguish the education service and these proved important in Adapting to Change.[17] For Kogan the interface of the teacher and the taught leads to a point of delivery discretion and labour intensiveness. Education has a history of massive expansion and provision is guarded by a set of almost immutable statutory commitments. Further there is a history of institutional linkages in the creation and delivery of policies. For Kogan, all of these affect the ability of central government to make radical cuts in educational spending. Adapting to Change shows that these factors also make it difficult for local authorities to promote radical cuts. Education is people-intensive and as Kogan says you cannot turn education on and off like a tap as might be the case in, for instance, a house-building programme. As Kogan writes,

"Real cuts essentially mean getting rid of people and the buildings they inhabit. But the traditional consultative process is hardly geared to making quantum cuts of this type."[18]

This 'people-intensity' was reflected in the further important area of the psychology and expectations of those involved. The psychology of expansion, as described above, was to prove a crucial stumbling block to any party who wished to reduce the service.

Looking at the government of education, the study of Adapting to Change offers a glimpse of an education administration under intense political pressure and it has been argued political concerns were

dominant. This reflects the closely involved 'hands-on' approach taken by senior councillors, in contrast to the more transient nature of the involvement of Scottish Office Ministers. Generally Ministers changed office relatively quickly and further, they were often in London and therefore remote form much educational policy making.

Clearly the Directorate was important within Strathclyde. However, this study has found little evidence of a linking them with a 'leadership class' in Scottish education, as defined by Humes. There may have been significant differences in influence at different levels within the Directorate but for the present inferences will be made about the officials as a group. For Humes they are,

"The people who collectively, set a large part of the agenda for Scottish education and contribute significantly to the formulation and implementation of policy." [19]

The management of roll contraction was an important item on the Scottish educational agenda Both the elements of influence and collectivity, mentioned by Humes were absent in Strathclyde. Even if connections do exist, Dunleavy and O'Leary caution against jumping from linking the social backgrounds and formal political power of elites to causal assumptions that their backgrounds or network of contacts affects their behaviour.[20] The lack of influence of the Directorate (defined by Humes as part of the leadership class) and the absence of an influential network of connections between the professionals of Strathclyde and the Scottish Office supports this. There may be an East of Scotland/ independent school bias, identified by McPherson and Raab[21], in the corridors of power but even if this were so it would lead to the need for a revision of Humes' thesis.

This study finds that while there may be an influential elite of professionals their power is weak in the overtly political sphere. Four strands support this argument. Firstly, there is no evidence of a 'hidden agenda' to which officers of the Council were working. If they were operating as part of the leadership class then it could be expected that they would display a taste for the 'bureaucratic expansionism, professional protectionism and ideological deception' described by Humes.[22] This was not found in relation to officers *acting independently from politicians.* Secondly, their willingness to modify educational arguments to suit political ends after the reversal of decisions by the Regional Review Group points to a willingness to sacrifice the professional for the political. In a democracy, political will should prevail, but the identification by councillors of weak professional leadership and the lack of evidence of strong arguments against political proposals point to lack of professional will to promote options not favoured by politicians. Thirdly, the dominance of political policy over the will of the educational professionals is important. The Region's support for the most deprived areas and for positive discrimination was developed outwith education and was imposed on the Directorate. This is not to say that the Directorate should not endorse such a policy. However, positive discrimination was not as evident within the Education (where myths of egalitarian /open access were strong) as in other regional services such as Social Work.

Evidence unearthed in this research shows a close, non-contentious relationship between professionals and politicians in Strathclyde with formality and distance in relations with the Scottish Office. It is likely that Adapting to Change would have run more smoothly, particularly in

dealings with central government, had a strong leadership class been in operation. Arrangements could then have been made with officials in the Scottish Office as to what were mutually acceptable solutions to the problems of roll decline. Meetings could have been held to discuss the acceptability to both parties of rationalisation proposals, thus protecting the education world from politicians and other departments of government. The lack of such links further undermines the idea of an influential policy community.

It is argued here that a contracting system has less of a place for a 'mandarin' power elite. Decisions to be made are more clear cut and more political and the expertise, culture and jargon of the professional is subject to great public scrutiny. Dennison comments in expansion, the real case need never be stripped bare and put forward but decisions in a contracting system show priorities quite clearly.[23] Further, the possibility for the correction of poor decisions is low. Humes' examination was made at the end of a period of expansion and so the power of the professionals was emphasised. In the depths of Adapting to Change this professional power was at a low point. The only evidence of a power elite was *within* Strathclyde Regional Council where the senior officers and politicians working together made up a formidable force. The use of officer/ member groups (as in the writing of "Adapting to Change") promoted merging of the professional with the political.

This study is more supportive of many of the conclusions drawn by McPherson and Raab. Their historical perspective proves to be most useful when looking at a period of contraction. Developments in the late eighties emphasise the 'roller coaster' nature in the change in power of

various parties involved in education. Two earlier events demonstrate this. In the post war period the government wanted stronger local authorities which could take on some of the burden of planning the education system. In the shape of the large regions that wish was fulfilled. The regions, with Strathclyde as the strongest example, developed into confident and sophisticated authorities which were well able to manage complex areas of educational planning. Their power grew to such an extent that the late eighties saw government trying to reduce the power of local government and to create smaller authorities. This impetus, however, was from politicians rather than from the civil servants. A second example follows from McPherson and Raab's assertion that,

"Deepening resource constraints emphasise the dilemma government has faced with the loss of a unifying ideology to legitimate differential provision."[24]

In the late eighties the government began to address the issue of differential provision by promoting the primacy of the 'market' over the principle of equal opportunity. This resulted in the expansion of the Assisted Places Scheme, the introduction of provisions for schools to opt out of local authority control and the creation (attempted creation in Scotland) of City Technology Colleges (Technology Academies in Scotland). These initiatives promoted conditions which made selective financing much easier than before. There were therefore moves from differential provision in the fifties and early sixties, to a comprehensive provision in the seventies back to increasing differentiation in the eighties.

Further, McPherson and Raab stress the importance of forces both outside Scotland and outside education. Adapting to Change cannot be

understood without acknowledgement of UK-wide political, economic and and ideological factors such as the increasing power of New Right ideology, financial retrenchment and increasing threats to local government. In this case, external pressures (fiscal and political) were stronger than forces within the education system. Scottish education was able to lessen the impact of some of these pressures but it could not ignore them. Adapting to Change was an example of an attempt to deal with problems arising from these wider pressures. Through it the Region hoped to absorb the pressures and hence conserve their system of education.

Despite this there was much residual power within the Region. It will be argued below that this power was enhanced because of the distinct character of Scottish education which made it less vulnerable to central government interference than that of England and Wales. The status of New Right ideology in Scotland and the disjunction of political philosophy between Glasgow and London are other outside influences which are crucial to the understanding of the issue. The attempt to woo parents to a more individualist, consumerist position and the rejection of this attempt must also be taken into account.

McPherson and Raab[25] stressed the biography of those involved as affecting perception and action. They described the 'Kirriemuir Career' of leading figures within the Scottish educational establishment. No less important were the experiences of the politicians, public and professionals of the West of Scotland. Those who had followed the Kirriemuir Career, starting at a time of non-universal secondary education and teaching in selective schools, were influential within

Scottish education in the fifties and sixties. An equivalent 'career' for the next generation would have included experience of universal secondary education and some involvement in the comprehensive system. Further, experience and expectation of secondary education extended beyond professionals to politicians and the public While a detailed analysis of the backgrounds of those involved in Adapting to Change is outwith the scope of this study there is evidence to point to a common 'cooperative' understanding of the way the education service should be run. This was discussed for various groups in chapter 6 and the importance of the background of those involved was stressed. The fact that the powerful within the system had spent most of their careers during a 'settled' period would have affected their approach to the issues. Proposals made by the Directorate and politicians sprung from and were limited by, this experience.

This study agrees with McPherson and Raab that power has drifted away from professional to politicians. It is reasonable in a resource allocation issue that the influence of politicians should be much stronger than other areas such as curricular reform. However Strathclyde argued that Adapting to Change was broadly educational and there were many educational issues (school size, single sex education) in which the voice of educationalists was only heard weakly. There is less evidence within Strathclyde of an erosion of power from the education service to other parts of the corporate administration. Most of the decision making was retained within the Education Department with other departments being used as service providers (e.g. for legal and statistical advice). Evidence supports agreement with McPherson and Raab that there was a pluralism, involving senior professionals, in the detail of the system but

not at the most political level. McPherson and Raab state that the Scottish system is generally pluralistic inside and has radical changes imposed from outside. It has been shown above that pluralism was not apparent in Strathclyde in the mid-eighties, especially in issues of service withdrawal. Certainly there was strong direction from government throughout the eighties but intervention on a single issue was not common.

Paradoxically the main architect of the intervention was Scottish. Was the Under Secretary an insider or an outsider? On one hand he was an insider with more experience of Scottish education than most Scottish Office ministers of the Conservative years. He did, however, have to go outside of Scottish politics in order to effect change as, as has been argued above, the Edinburgh layer of government tended to dilute radical innovations. It is argued here that this dichotomy was a telling combination with the Scottish dimension adding knowledge and political focus with the UK dimension providing his power base. The issue of government intervention in Scottish education will be returned to below.

(b) Ideology

The contribution of parents' groups and the public in general was remarkable in two ways. First, they almost totally rejected the New Right ideologies promoted by government. It would be too easy to ignore the reasons behind this by asserting that this was a Labour-voting area which traditionally resisted the Conservatives. This is true but the adherence to a cooperative rather than individualistic approach was apparent in middle class schools where many parents were unlikely to vote Labour. Again this could be explained with reference to egalitarianism and

democratic traditions. These ideas have been well rehearsed elsewhere and while acknowledging their influence they will not be repeated here.[26] Instead, accepting the possibility of change of ideology (as witnessed by the public acceptance of the Thatcher agenda) more immediate reasons will be sought.

Two concepts will be applied. The first is 'unsettlement' and the second 'ideological realignment'. Apple writes,

"... the movement away from social democratic principles and the acceptance of more right wing positions in social and educational policy occur precisely because conservative groups have been able to work on popular sentiments, to reorganise genuine feelings, and in the process to win adherents."[27]

Many writers emphasise the era of educational 'settlement' in post war education [28] (some writers such as Gerwirtz and Ozga[29] feel that power was not as pluralist as is often asserted). The pluralist era in which education operated with broad national support started to disintegrate from the mid-seventies onwards. Dale explores the 'unsettlement' flowing from economic recession and increasing demands made on education. Apple also highlights the move from the post war 'social contract' to a much more individual and anti statist-structure. For Apple, the fears raised by the Right have real relevance to the white, working and lower middle classes. However, on the economic front there are few areas in Strathclyde which gained a great deal from the economic changes in the eighties. Strathclyde with its declining heavy industry was an area which lost a great deal in the economic realignment of the early eighties. The move in Britain from manufacturing to service industries had impacted particularly on some of the areas affected by school closures. Therefore appeals, based on the experience of economic expansion in the

South-East of England, did not find fertile soil in the West of Scotland.

While such innovations as TVEI, parental choice, and the Assisted Places Scheme were introduced throughout the UK, it is argued here that 'unsettlement' did not occur in Scotland to a great extent. Evidence from this study shows that the public were unhappy about the plans for reorganisation of education provision but were rarely critical of schools or teachers. There was almost universal support for the seven year primary, six year secondary, comprehensive model. The proposals in Glasgow North West for the housing of primary and secondary schools in secondary school buildings were the exception but even in that case, the sectors were to be kept administratively separate. The only other significant proposal regarding the organisation of schools was support for the elimination of the denominational divide, which could be seen as extending the comprehensive system. While this lack of criticism was in part due to the nature of Adapting to Change, there were many opportunities for parents to go against the cooperative grain; these were not on the whole taken. Outside education, a culture of dissatisfaction with other public services in Scotland was not evident, with markedly less enthusiasm being shown for privatisation and 'opting out' than in other parts of the UK. The eighties saw the promotion of anti-statist views in Britain. The contradiction inherent in these notions and the increased centralisation of power and tightening of authority especially against powerful groups such as Trades Unions, the media and the professions is obvious. In Strathclyde anti-statist views were not apparent.

The second concept important here is what will be called 'ideological

realignment'. This will be used to describe the situation where ideologies become commonly acceptable by having been proposed repeatedly in many arenas. This is not an attempt to create false consciousness but an attempt to interrupt, renovate and reform practical consciousness. Combining the ideas of unsettlement and ideological realignment it is proposed that their combination can change the public's perception of the world. It is asserted that there was not a significant ideological shift in Scotland because there was not significant unsettlement within education and because attempts at ideological realignment were ill-targeted and ineffective.

There are three reasons for this. First, while beyond the scope of this thesis there, was much rejection of government ideas on an anti-Thatcher and anti-Tory basis. The Prime Minister was extremely unpopular in Scotland and there was an element of anti-metropolitain bias which rejected many ideas imported by the Conservatives. This could be seen as an ideological inoculation which weakened messages from the South. Scottish counter-ideologies were linked to the rise in Conservative ideologies and were strengthened by the progress of the Right.

Second was the strength of the the Scottish media (as described in chapter 3). The media, to attract viewers and readers, emphasised its Scottish identity. Political and social events were seen from a Scottish angle and the media, particularly the popular press, tended to take a more centre/left stance than did their English equivalents. From the public's point of view much of the UK media coverage and political statements in the period of unsettlement was so clearly based on the English system

that they could easily feel that criticisms were of England and Wales and therefore by implication not of Scotland. Therefore much ideological realignment did not hit home.

Third, public pronouncements on education differed. London based politicians were not knowledgeable about Scottish education (the Scots within the cabinet were often public school/ English educated). If they criticised the system they were at great risk of misnaming parts and highlighting their ignorance of distinctively Scottish aspects. This combined with perception that the system had strayed less far from tradition than in other parts of the UK led to a lack of criticism by senior UK politicians. Scottish education was seen to be more traditional, didactic and less child centred than its English equivalent. The UK politicians' easiest tack was to leave the reconstruction of Scottish education to the Scottish Office whose politicians could knowledgeably 'unsettle' it if necessary.

However Edinburgh proved another barrier, and for Mrs Thatcher, another layer of bureaucracy.[30] The protection offered by distinctive structure and terminology was important. In Scotland there was a broad centre/ left block which included the non-Tory parties and the Churches which helped form opinion. The Scottish educational establishment was conservative and protective of its territory. There was not the will in the Scottish Office to implement radical change. It is argued here that the Scottish Office tended to dilute central government policies in order that they were more acceptable to the educational establishment and to public opinion. (Here, the educational establishment is seen as a broad and shifting group including politicians and professionals rather than a

tightly defined 'leadership class').

The presence contradicting many of these statements was the Under Secretary of State. He was willing to attempt to promote ideological realignment in Scotland but as a lone voice he was unlikely to succeed as realignment needed, following the argument above, to be espoused by variety of sources. The Under Secretary saw the need for 'unsettlement' and by intervention in Strathclyde hoped to some extent to shake the cooperative foundation of the West of Scotland and of Scottish education. Evidence suggests he did not succeed.

Dunleavy and O'Leary comments on social cleavages are interesting in this connection. Taking a physical analogy they propose that cleavages do not necessarily weaken society unless the cleavages run in the same direction. They state that,

"Despite the pluralists' general optimism about polyarchy, they have always had some developed accounts of possible crisis tendencies due to badly patterned cleavages in a society or over-centralization of government institutions."[31]

While this study has not found a wide plurality of interest having had influence in Adapting to Change it is relevant to consider the direction of social cleavages in 1980's Strathclyde. Dunleavy and O'Leary comment that crises may arise when there is insufficient social pluralism, because there is a single salient social cleavage which cannot be bargained in the same way as a class issue. In the case under study cleavages did run in the same direction. Nationalism (whether associated with the Scottish National Party or not), cooperativism and satisfaction with the education system as well as (broadly) class differed from much of the rest of Britain.

Dunleavy and O'Leary are of the opinion that,

"In a society with cumulative cleavages, or intensely divided along a single dimension which outweighs all other issues, the introduction of an inappropriate institutional form ... will create a crisis of state legitimacy."[32]

While it would be foolish to try to equate social unrest in Scotland with areas of the world where society was in crisis due to religious and ethnic splits it is still useful to use this idea to consider how governments' (local and national) legitimacy and ability to govern is affected.

(c) Legitimacy

Legitimacy is both a normative and empirical concept in political science which asserts or examines whether or not a state or government is entitled to be obeyed. Here the term is used less rigorously to consider the varying claims of central and local government to power over local education. Their legitimacy was bound up in the democratic process and in competing claims to the popular mandate. This is central to many central/local disputes. This conflict reflects both the uncertain position of local government in Britain as discussed in chapter 1 and the acceptance or rejection of the Union. The Labour Party remained unionist but there was from the broader centre/left much questioning of the Tories' right to govern in Scotland.

The contrast between the popular mandate of Strathclyde and central government could scarcely have been greater. As described in chapter 1 the Council enjoyed massive electoral support while support for the Conservatives in Scotland was plummeting. There were other interesting

differences between the two layers of government. Regional politicians were in close contact with their public being geographically and politically accessible. They could be pressurised within the Labour movement, at local surgeries, by deputations, at public meetings and by phone calls. In contrast Scottish Office politicians had no popular mandate from Scotland and had difficulties in finding members for Parliamentary Committees. Their constituencies were outside Strathclyde and they were therefore remote from the communities affected by Adapting to Change. More importantly, they were politically remote, as the weakness of the Conservative Party in the West of Scotland made access to Conservative centres of influence difficult for the public. As a result they were not subject to the relentless pressure which was put on councillors during Adapting to Change and were able to stand back from the situation.

The Secretary of State was often often compared by the Left to a colonial governor who administered the rules of a foreign power. To extend this analogy (which had a grain of truth to it given the isolated nature of the Tories) could be extended to view the Secretary of State as a politician who took a fairly benign view of the colony by adjusting political action to suit local conditions. The Under Secretary did not take that approach and did not defer to the Scottish popular vote. He chose to concentrate on particular issues which might promote the Thatcherite cause. Thus schools affected by Adapting to Change were treated as if they existed in isolation and were not part of the wider pattern of educational provision in Strathclyde. This mirrored a Conservative rejection of society, emphasis on the individual and promotion of a particular kind of consumer choice. The Under Secretary took a true unionist line, not watering down policies, giving them a Scottish 'spin' or protecting

Strathclyde from the UK mandate. His personal style was important in that he appeared tenacious, abrasive and uncompromising.

It is argued here that political change was easier for central government than for local government. Intervention from London was treated with resignation by the public as there was very little which could be done against a massive Parliamentary majority. This pattern was repeated in a series of unpopular decisions following which the Scottish opposition parties had difficulty in exerting influence on government (e.g. the Closures of Gartcosh and Ravenscraig and the introduction of the Poll Tax).

In the prevailing political climate, Strathclyde, because of internal stresses, could not make decisions to close some schools and retain others. "Adapting to Change" laid out Strathclyde's criteria for closing schools. The process may not have extended power but it did provide information. This reflects the findings of Bondi who argued that 'open' authorities found it harder to close schools than those who kept the process distant from the public.[33] Central government, however, could save some schools and condemn others without fear of backlash. The Conservatives' stated criterion for support of schools was popularity, a concept which was flexible and hard to question. Support for the Conservatives was so low it had little further to sink. The chance of appealing to some potential voters while at the same time gaining political points over Strathclyde was appealing. Adapting to Change offered a chance of some progress in the movement to unsettle the Scottish education consensus. It was possible that Tory sponsored schools would act as flagships of a new world of non local authority education.

Hence the Tories' attempts to introduce Technology Academies and self-governing schools in addition to their support of private education. While in the short term this resulted in little weakening of local authority control over schools, politicians needed only to look at English education to see the direction the government wished to take. Unsettlement would help undermine the local authorities and would 'roll back the state' in the vital area of education. These flagship schools could be the catalyst leading to the end of comprehensive schooling and introducing consumer choice and diversity. At the same time they would encourage the natural demise of some of the unpopular local authority schools.

7.4 Conclusion

This thesis has made an in-depth description and analysis of Adapting to Change, the attempt in the late 1980's by Strathclyde Regional Council to implement a planned schools' rationalisation programme. The thesis has attempted to do three things. The first of these was to record Adapting to Change, as an important initiative in its own right. The second was to consider the initiative in the light of the major analytical tools, such as pluralism, corporatism and centralism, used in the literature of government in general educational policy making in particular. The third aim was to add to the 'revisionist' critique of Scottish education.

Adapting to Change was a complex exercise in which an attempt was made to devolve some power. In the course of events, the Council's aim to have a broadly agreed rationalisation programme failed. This failure was partly due to the lack of willingness of some local groups to recommend closures. This reluctance was a result of the highly politicised

and public nature of the reviews and of the unwillingness of groups to sanction the loss of local resources when there were few perceived benefits resulting from closures. The Council's attempt to portray Adapting to Change as an educational exercise failed and closure recommendations were seen as 'cuts'. That some areas did propose closures led to an inconsistency of approach across the Region.

The Council's action on this inconsistency (and on the limited nature of closure proposals) led to a large scale increase in the number of closure proposals by the Regional Review Group. This abandoned the original consultative rationale and undermined the whole exercise. The subsequent reversal of the Regional Review Group decisions by the Labour Group, in the face of public outcry, and the selective intervention of central government further discredited the process. In the end only a modest reduction in surplus places was achieved with Adapting to Change being seen by the Council as a low point in its history.

In terms of the locus of power and influence it has been argued that this study provides evidence of a 'dual centred' control over education policy. The two loci of power are central government and senior councillors. Central government had absolute power when it cared to use it. When it did it was selective and paid little attention to the broader system of local authority education provision. For instance in Paisley, intervention saved Paisley Grammar without taking into account the interconnectedness of Paisley schools. Central government otherwise remained aloof from the controversial area of falling school rolls. Though the Right promoted radical change, particularly from London, their intentions were diluted by the conciliatory nature of the Edinburgh

layer of government. Local government, in the absence of central intervention was a very strong force with power concentrated in the hands of a few politicians. These politicians were only subject to occasional central government control and pressures from within their party.

There was little plurality of influence. Parents' groups had little influence unless they were selected to be treated favourably by either central government or Strathclyde Region. The Roman Catholic Church and the EIS were incorporated at local level and to some extent at national level and therefore had greater influence. No evidence was found for the existence of a leadership class a though there was some evidence of a Strathclyde version of a combined professional/ political power elite.

It has been argued that in a contracting system there is less of a role for professionals in highly politicised issues and the study found few examples of officers exercising substantial control over the policy process. In this area of local government there little evidence to support elite (or corporatist) classification of the policy making process. The thesis has supported the identification by McPherson and Raab of a drift of power in Scotland from education towards politicians and central government and concluded with observations on the lack of support for New Right ideology in Scotland and has proposed that central government was able to intervene selectively in Strathclyde, with few resulting political consequences. It is argued that this was in part (paradoxically) due to the lack of legitimacy and accessibility of the Conservative Party.

In total Adapting to Change exemplifies the pain of withdrawal of services. This pain is felt most acutely by those directly involved but the negative consequences affected Strathclyde fundamentally. Wider consideration of the results of contraction could benefit both the providers of services and those concerned with the study of policy making.

Finally this chapter has proposed that the lack of 'conversion' of local communities to radical Conservative programmes has been due to the lack of 'unsettlement' of Scottish education partly due to ill-targeted and weak ideological 'realignment'. The influence of social and political cleavages which separated the West of Scotland from Westminster contributed this the resistance to Conservative ideas. It has also been argued that paradoxically, the lack of legitimacy of government led to ease of action.

The findings are important because there is, as yet, a lack of academic attention given to contracting areas of the system. This is unfortunate as it is within these areas that much harm can be inflicted on children and communities and where the mechanisms of power and influence are displayed most clearly. Subsequent events demonstrated why adapting to Change was so important. The use of 'opt out' legislation by parents groups, proposals for single tier local authorities and the selective support of politicians made the process of school rationalisation in Strathclyde drag for years before eventually grinding to a halt. In the nineties the issues are still present and there is much to be learned from past attempts to deal with them. The difficulties of balancing the needs of the individual child and institution with the needs of the wider system were

at the heart of Adapting to Change and at the heart of much educational policy. The contraction described in this thesis was undoubtedly painful. Some pain seems to have been inevitable but much could be avoided in the future if the mistakes made are not repeated.

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[4] Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) op. cit., p. 335.

[5] Ibid., see pp.323-327 for an overview of overlaps and cleavages between theories of the state.

[6] Ibid., p. 345.

[7] Ibid., p. 60.

[8] Ibid., p. 320.

[9] Ibid., p. 192.

[10] Kogan (1981) op. cit., p.166.

[11] Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) op. cit., pp. 57-59.

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[13] Midwinter, A. and Page, E. (1981) 'Cutting Local Spending- the Scottish Experience, 1978-80.' in Hood and Wright (1981) op. cit., p. 74.

[14] Hood and Wright (1981) op. cit.,p. 145.

[15] Schmitter (1974) op. cit.

[16] See Dennison (1981) op. cit. and Walsh et al. (1984) op. cit.

[17] Kogan (1981) op. cit. p. 153.

[18] Ibid., p. 161.

[19] Humes (1986) op. cit.,p. 29.

[20] Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) op. cit., p. 151.

[21] McPherson and Raab (1988) op. cit., p. 422.

[22] Humes, W. (1986) op. cit., p. 201.

[23] Dennison (1981) op. cit., p. 153.

[24] McPherson and Raab (1988) op. cit., p. 487.

[25] Ibid., ch. 2.

[26] See McPherson, A. (1983) 'An Angle on the Geist: Persistence and Change in the Scottish Education Tradition', in Humes, W. and Paterson, H. (eds.), *Scottish Culture and Scottish Education: 1800-1980*, (Edinburgh, John Donald).

[27] See Apple, M. (1989) 'Critical Introduction: Ideology and the State in Education Policy' in Dale, R. *The State and Education Policy*, (Milton Keynes, Open University), Broadfoot (1986) op. cit., Kogan (1985) op. cit.,McNay and Ozga (1985) op. cit.

[28] Dale (1989) op. cit., ch. 7.

[29] Gerwirtz and Ozga (1990) op. cit.

[30] Thatcher (1993) op. cit. p. 619.

[31] Dunleavy and O'Leary (1987) op. cit., p. 59.

[32] Ibid., p. 61.

[33] Bondi (1986) op. cit. p. 56.

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